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THE HISTORY AND POLITICS OF THE
YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME 1978-1983

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the thesis is to analyse the function fulfilled by the Youth Opportunities Programme (1978-1983) in its wider political, economic and historical context. There are three main sections to the work.

The first establishes the context from which the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) emerged. This includes: an analysis of the origins and early development of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC); an historical account of government policy and special measures for the relief of unemployment; and a description of the circumstances and manner in which these elements came together in the development of the MSC's special measures policy, leading to the launch of YOP in April 1978. It is concluded that the initial role of the programme was essentially that of a palliative in the context of the Labour Government's social contract relationship with the trade union movement rather than being a positive element in the MSC's development of a comprehensive manpower policy.

The second section is concerned with the actual development and performance of the programme in relation to its original objectives. This includes national level analyses in terms of both quantitative and qualitative objectives, and the conclusions of a case study conducted in the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area.

The third section examines the significance of the divergences revealed between objectives and results, both in the context of contemporary political and economic developments, and also in a wider historical context which includes the initial progress made by YOP's successor, the Youth Training Scheme (YTS). It is concluded that, although YOP continued to act as a palliative, it developed beyond this towards a new form of active manpower policy consistent with a monetarist macro-economic context. On the basis of this analysis, alternative scenarios for the future are briefly considered.

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INTRODUCTION

In the 1950s and 1960s the process of transition from school to work was relatively unproblematical for most young people. There may have been a lack of training available, but there were plenty of jobs to choose from. For those young people without many qualifications, and who were not undertaking an apprenticeship, it was common practice to try out a number of jobs in rapid succession before settling down into what would be a more long term career. This was made possible by the conditions of effective full employment which had prevailed since the end of the Second World War.

In the 1970s unemployment went out of control. Young people were disproportionately affected, and the transition from school to work became an issue of major public concern. The need was seen for increased state intervention and the main responsibility for this was given to a newly-created governmental agency, the Manpower Services Commission(M.S.C.).

In October 1976 the MSC published a review document entitled Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy. This constituted the first attempt on the part of the Commission since its formation in 1974 to produce a strategic overview of its policy, role, and structure, in relation to a projection into the future of current economic and labour market trends. The policy recommendation that derived from the analysis of current youth unemployment trends was as follows:

"it should become an objective of the Commission to ensure that all young people of 16 to 18 years of age who have no job or who are not engaged in further or higher full-time education should have the opportunity of training, of participation in a job creation programme or of work experience". (1)

The outcome of this statement was that a working party was set up with a brief to study all the existing measures to help unemployed young people, and to report on the feasibility of securing the above-stated objectives. In May 1977 the working party published its report under the title of Young People and Work (usually referred to as the Holland Report). It consisted of detailed proposals for the establishment of a new Youth Opportunities Programme (Y.O.P), packaged in the optimistic rhetoric of a new deal for young people:

"The time has now come to turn a major problem and cost into an opportunity and a benefit.

We hope that the programme we propose can provide as many opportunities as are likely to be needed. It offers each young person an effective bridge to permanent employment and encourages and helps him or her to cross at the earliest available moment. Moreover, the programme is designed to bring young people the kind of help they most need in the form they want it. It thus aims to demonstrate by deeds rather than words that society cares about them, and, through them, about its own future". (2)

YOP was launched on 1st April 1978. Five years later, when the programme was closed to new entrants, it had catered for over 1.8 million young people. Yet, despite this massive quantitative achievement which was far beyond anything originally anticipated by the authors of the Holland Report, the credibility of the programme had to a large extent been exhausted by this stage. Under extremely difficult circumstances, it had succeeded in providing as many opportunities as were needed, at least as defined in terms of its principal undertaking to unemployed school leavers. Yet, increasingly, it had failed to provide an effective bridge into permanent employment. Moreover, it had not lived up to original expectations in terms of training content and the general quality of provision. Doubts had emerged about its overall impact on the youth labour market, and widespread complaints had been made of 'cheap labour' and other such abuses leading to the destruction of

permanent jobs. At the end of the five years, despite YOP taking up to 300,000 young people off the labour market at any one time, youth unemployment remained as much a problem, if not more, than it was at the start.

YOP began to lose credibility from its second year onwards, and by mid-way through the third year a point of crisis had been reached. The only way in which the programme was able to continue, and to complete its five year lifespan, was on the basis of the promise that it was leading to something very different and much better. This was to be the Youth Training Scheme (Y.T.S.).

The equivalent of the Holland Report for YTS was a document called the Youth Task Group Report which was published in April 1982. This made clear from the beginning that the new scheme being proposed was not to be just another temporary special programme for the young unemployed. Thus the opening paragraph stated:

"This report is about providing a permanent bridge between school and work. It is not about youth unemployment. What we propose will improve the prospects of young people to get and keep jobs but we have not been concerned with temporary measures". (3)

The permanent bridge was to be based upon the comprehensive provision of an integrated and high quality programme of training, education and work experience for all young people leaving school, whether employed or unemployed. Yet, whatever the intended differences in terms of content, the style of presentation involved the same rhetoric of the historic new deal for young people which had originally been applied to YOP. The report concluded:

'The government has created a major opportunity for itself, for the country, and above all, for young people. The opportunity is there for the taking'. (4)

Since its replacement by YTS in April 1983, YOP's reputation has not improved in hindsight. If anything, it has deteriorated still further. Those who were previously responsible for the programme, and who fought hard to sustain its credibility, no longer have any reason to defend YOP. Their interest now lies in emphasising the extent of the difference between YOP and YTS, and drawing attention to the failings of the former is one way of attempting to boost the reputation of the latter. What were previously regarded as momentous achievements of YOP have largely been forgotten, and after one year of YTS almost everybody seems to refer back to the 'now discredited Youth Opportunities Programme'. Yet, the two entities cannot be completely separated in this way. In many important respects YOP led directly to YTS, and in certain ways YTS appears to have reproduced the fundamental characteristics of YOP. Ultimately, any historical judgement of the meaning and achievements of the Youth Opportunities Programme must include some assessment of the establishment of the Youth Training Scheme and its eventual outcome.

The object of this thesis is both to detail the events which have just been sketched and to analyse them in a wider historical, political, and economic context. The description of the development and performance of the Youth Opportunities Programme includes not only an account from a national level perspective, but also a detailed case study of a particular local labour market, the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area. An important characteristic of YOP was its diversified mode of administration which was intended to enhance the programme's capacity to adapt to the individual needs of different local labour markets. As a result, there were certain aspects of its performance that could only be adequately assessed at a local level. Yet, obviously, there are certain limitations to the extent that generalisations can be drawn from a single case study. For this reason, the main account of the local research has been reproduced in the form of an extended appendix. Nevertheless, it has been possible to set this account in the context of the national level analysis and therefore to integrate its conclusions

into the main text. Besides this, the local case study has provided much illustrative material which not only stands on its own in the context of the appendix, but which has informed and enriched the main analysis in many ways that are not explicitly stated.

The main purpose of the detailed accounts which are given of the development and performance of YOP is to compare the actual achievements of the programme with what it was originally intended to do. This includes a concern with certain effects which might be regarded as unintended consequences. The analysis of the differences which emerged between stated objectives and actual results takes place within a wider context which includes both the history of manpower policies and special measures for the unemployed, as well as the immediate and changing political and economic conditions under which YOP developed.

The starting point of the thesis is with the establishment of the historical aspect of this wider context. Thus, Chapter 1 is concerned with the origins and early development of the Manpower Services Commission, and Chapter 2 with the history of special measures for the unemployed. These two themes are then brought together in Chapter 3 with an account of the growing involvement of the Manpower Services Commission with special measures for the unemployed leading up to its launch of the Youth Opportunities Programme. The same chapter also introduces the immediate political and economic context within which these events took place, and provides a systematic analysis of the original objectives set out by the Holland Report. The next two chapters detail the development and performance of YOP at a national level in relation to these objectives, Chapter 4 being concerned with quantity and Chapter 5 with quality. Chapter 6 then adds in the conclusions of the local case study. The material covered in these three previous chapters is summarised at the beginning of Chapter 7, before being analysed in the context of the political and economic changes which took place over the five year lifespan of the programme. Chapter 8 reintroduces the wider historical perspective, starting with an account of the progress made in its first year by the

Youth Training Scheme. The significance of this for the historical judgement of YOP is then analysed in terms of the themes of manpower policy and special measures for the unemployed. Finally in this chapter, there is a brief consideration of alternatives for the future. The thesis ends with a formal summary of conclusions. The account of the local case study forms a separate appendix.

Clearly, a wide range of ground is covered: from the 19th Century Poor Law to the introduction of the Youth Training Scheme, from the broad principles of economic policy to the experience of an individual 16 year old serving behind the counter of a small fishing tackle shop in Portsmouth. This indicates the extent of the implications of a programme such as YOP; yet by no means all angles have been covered. In particular, the educational implications of the programme have only been briefly touched upon. Generally, in attempting to cover such a wide area, it has been necessary to be very selective. A number of narrow lines have been drawn across from one boundary to another in an attempt to show the links between aspects of particular interest. The course of these lines has been determined by the central objective of answering two relatively straight forward questions; what were the actual effects of the Youth Opportunities Programme, both intended and unintended, and what was their wider historical, political and economic significance?

Footnotes

1. MSC, Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy, October 1976 para.4.21.
2. MSC, Young People and Work May 1977, p.7.
3. MSC, Youth Task Group Report. April 1982, para.1.1.
4. Ibid., para. 7.26.

CHAPTER 1THE MANPOWER SERVICES COMMISSIONORIGINS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT1. The Creation of the MSC

The Manpower Services Commission began its operations in January 1974, its statutory basis having been established in the 1973 Employment and Training Act. At the time of its formation, the Commission was considered to be an important innovation: (1) at a specific level, in the organisation and management of British manpower services; at a more general level, in the conventional pattern of operation and responsibility of British government and public administration. First, it brought together under the same co-ordinating structure both employment and training services which had previously existed separately within the Department of Employment and had since been in the process of being 'hived off' as independent agencies. Secondly, it gave to those who use these services - employers and employees - a direct collective responsibility for their management, thus combining representative and operational functions in the same organisation. (2)

The representative aspect of the new body was constituted in its 'tripartite' composition. The actual Commission, in its most limited sense, was to consist of ten people selected on the following basis: three members nominated by organisations representing employers (i.e. the CBI); three members nominated by organisations representing employees (i.e. the TUC); two members nominated by the local authority associations; one member nominated by educational interests; and a chairman, in the matter of whose appointment the Secretary of State for Employment was given full discretion, there being no requirement for consultation. This body, supported by a small number of staff, was to take over the running of the Employment Services Agency (E.S.A.) and the Training Services Agency (T.S.A.), its role being like that of the board of directors of a holding company with the two agencies being in effect its operational subsidiaries.

The responsibility of the Commission for the management of manpower services was defined as follows by Section 2 of the 1973 Act:

"it shall be the duty of the Commission to make such arrangements as it considers appropriate for the purpose of assisting persons to select, train for, obtain and retain employment and to obtain suitable employees..."⁽³⁾

This responsibility had previously been directly in the hands of the Secretary of State. Under the new legislation, the Secretary of State still retained an overall responsibility and was still expected to answer to Parliament for the execution of this responsibility, but the day-to-day management of the services involved was to be left to the Commission and its two agencies. Thus the relationship of the Commission to central government was to be that of a semi-autonomous body, or what might loosely be referred to as a 'quango'.⁽⁴⁾ As such, it was also to act as a form of clearing house for labour market information and to have a major role in the formulation of manpower policy. Thus, provision was made for an annual programme and budget, plus a medium term five year rolling programme, to be presented by the Commission each year. These would be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, who was also empowered to issue directions of his own. Furthermore, the Treasury was to retain control over the funding of the Commission, which was to be by means of a 'grant-in-aid' through the Department of Employment.

Thus, the MSC came into existence as a semi-autonomous tripartite body, combining representative and operational functions in its role of supervising and co-ordinating the management of employment and training services. As such, it constituted a radically new kind of organisation. Yet, despite the significance of the innovation involved, the MSC's creation was the result of what was in a certain sense a last minute decision, and consequently it was only superimposed over the two agencies when in effect they were already independent bodies.⁽⁵⁾ A brief examination of the immediate context in which the decision to set up the MSC was made will demonstrate how this came about.

Originally, it had been intended by the Conservative Government then in power that the two Agencies being hived off from the Department of Employment should remain separate. In 1971 People and Jobs, the consultative document that presented the Government's plans for the modernisation and hiving off of the employment services, had suggested that some form of general council on manpower services should be set up on a tripartite basis, in order to facilitate the co-ordination of employment services with the other manpower services. However, this was only to be an advisory council, and it was not considered practical at the time to invest such a body with executive powers as well. The idea of such a general advisory council on manpower services was repeated in Training For The Future, the consultative document concerned with the reorganisation and hiving off of training services that was released in 1972. This general council, it was proposed, would replace the existing Central Training Council, a tripartite advisory body whose role was restricted to manpower issues concerned with training.

During the process of consultation that followed the publication of these two documents, a consensus was built up around the opinion that a mere advisory council would be inadequate for the important task of co-ordinating employment and training policies. What was needed instead was some kind of labour board based on the Swedish model, capable of exercising executive powers on its own behalf in the pursuit of an active and coherent manpower policy. This had been a long held view of the TUC, (6) and the CBI was likewise prepared to give the idea its support. But the Conservative Government was initially reluctant to give up its opinion that the granting of executive powers to such a body would be impractical, (7) and thus it continued with its plans to develop the employment and training services as wholly separate agencies. Nevertheless, in response to a joint statement from the TUC and the CBI pressing for the establishment of a National Manpower Board, the Secretary of State agreed to extend the process of consultation; eventually the Government relented, and then swiftly came up with proposals of its own for the creation of the MSC. (8)

The consensus that existed between both sides of industry on this matter ensured that when these proposals were announced in Parliament by the Tory Secretary of State, Maurice Macmillan, no major obstacles were placed in their way. Indeed, the main area of dispute between the political parties was over who had thought of the idea first. Both Government and Opposition claimed that they had been discussing the creation of such a body for a number of years; the Secretary of State sought credit for being the first person to have acted upon these discussions.⁽⁹⁾ Likewise, when these proposals were translated into the legislative form of the Employment and Training Bill, although there was disagreement over the measures included to curtail the levying powers of the Industrial Training Boards, there was broad cross-party agreement on the sections concerned with the establishment of the MSC. What argument there was concerned the extension and further detailing of the powers and responsibilities that were being granted. For example, in the course of debate Labour MPs called for the Commission to be given a special and explicit responsibility for the unemployed in the 16 to 19 age group.⁽¹⁰⁾ Also the TUC would have liked there to have been a more strongly interventionist role defined for the Commission in the legislation and, in particular, for there to have been some explicit allocation of responsibility for job creation to the new body.⁽¹¹⁾ However, Government spokesmen argued that the broad and general definition of duties under Section 2 of the Bill gave sufficient scope to the Commission.⁽¹²⁾

Thus the creation of the MSC came out of a process of consultation in which it had not originally been on the agenda. Little over a year elapsed between the Government's first announcement of its acceptance of the idea (November 1972), and the MSC's coming into operation at the beginning of 1974. Yet, such speed was only possible because of the strength of the consensus that emerged around the idea of creating such a body during the process of consultation; and this, in itself, was indicative of the fact that the idea represented the confluence of a number of powerful and longstanding trends. These can be identified both specifically within manpower policy, and more generally within the political and administrative system.

2. The MSC and Active Manpower Policy

The major trend that needs to be explained within manpower policy is the development of what is generally referred to as an 'active manpower policy'. This, in its turn, can best be understood within the context of a brief history of the development of manpower services in this country.

The history of the two services that were brought together under the umbrella of the MSC can be traced back to the first quarter of the twentieth century. (13) The origins of the Public Employment Service can be found in the 1909 Labour Exchanges Act which resulted in the establishment of a National Exchange system under the Board of Trade. It was originally envisaged by those such as Beveridge, who had been responsible for pressing for this legislation, that a national system of labour exchanges would be able to make an important contribution to the efficiency of the operation of the labour market. However, soon after the system was established, the exchanges were made responsible for the administration of the new national social insurance, and as a result, their role in employment placement was rapidly relegated to one of secondary importance. (14)

The subordination of the original purpose of the employment services was to continue for the next half century, despite the great extensions of government direction of manpower that took place temporarily during each of the two world wars. In particular, the mass unemployment of the 1920s and 1930s forced further emphasis to be put upon the insurance work of the exchanges, at the expense of their employment and placement functions. (15) This situation has often been described within the literature on manpower policy in terms of social objectives being given priority over economic objectives; social objectives being understood to be primarily concerned with the welfare of individuals, economic objectives to be primarily concerned with the efficient use of labour resources, and the growth and welfare of the economy. (16)

This same order of priorities has generally been considered to

have applied to the development of government training services, at least up until the early 1960s. The prevalent view was that it was primarily industry's responsibility to meet its own training needs, and consequently government provisions were reserved for exceptional circumstances, notably those arising during or immediately after war, and for special categories, such as the disabled. (17) Thus it was during the first World War that the Government first undertook the provision of vocational training, when instructional factories were established to provide skill training for the war disabled. After the war, the provision of these facilities was extended to those of the able-bodied who had missed their normal induction into industry because of their military service, but this was only ever seen as a short-term measure to assist resettlement. However, the 1920s did see the use, at least on a small-scale, of government training provisions as a measure for the relief of mass unemployment. In 1925, for example, the first Government Training Centre was established for the benefit of young unemployed men between the ages of 18 and 25 who had not previously had the opportunity to learn a skilled trade. But such measures were never of a significant scale in comparison with the problem of mass unemployment that was being faced, and once again, in accordance with the distinction made above, their purpose was primarily social - the bringing of some form of relief to certain unemployed individuals. (18)

The meaning of an active manpower policy can now be explained by way of contrast with the predominant pre-Second World War pattern of provision that has been described above. An active manpower policy implies that, beyond and in addition to any social purposes they may serve, manpower services are to be used to make an 'active' and significant contribution to wider economic policy objectives. It was not until the early 1960s that such an active manpower policy began to be explicitly developed in Great Britain, but its origins are to be understood within the context of the economic policy objectives that were adopted at the end of the Second World War, in particular, the commitment that was made to a policy for full employment.

In 1944 the war-time Coalition Government issued the famous White Paper on Employment Policy that opened with the words:

"The Government accept as one of their primary aims and responsibilities the maintenance of a high and stable level of employment after the war." (19)

This formal acknowledgement of the Government's responsibility to maintain a high level of employment was of great significance: it marked the public commitment of members of both major political parties never to return to the mass unemployment that had been tolerated or thought inevitable during the inter-war period. The rest of the document proceeded to detail the main features of the economic policy that would be necessary for the pursuit of this commitment, within the more general aim of national economic efficiency and growth.

The primary long-term policy for the achievement of a high and stable level of employment was to be that of demand management. This was to involve the use of monetary and fiscal policy on the part of the Government to ensure the maintenance of a high level of aggregate demand for goods and services. Thus, whenever the danger of a slump in demand appeared, the Government was to take various forms of prompt action to stimulate public and private expenditure in both capital investment and consumption. (20)

However, Government adherence to such a policy of demand management was not regarded as a sufficient condition for the maintenance of high levels of employment. A number of other conditions were referred to by the White Paper. First, it was pointed out that it would not be enough to maintain domestic demand at a high level: the demand for exports would also have to be expanded, and the foreign balance of trade kept in equilibrium. The Government's role in this respect would be to collaborate with other national governments in order to secure conditions favourable for the expansion of international trade. It would then be industry's responsibility to take advantage of these conditions by competing efficiently. (21)

A second condition for the success of demand management policy, emphasised as necessary by the White Paper, was the maintenance of a reasonably stable level of prices and wages. This, it was said, would require co-operation and moderation from both workers and employers to hold down wages and profits in line with productivity and thereby avoid the disruptive effects of inflation. (22)

The third condition mentioned by the White Paper was "a sufficient mobility of workers between occupations and localities". (23) Even if the general level of demand were kept high, patches of unemployment, localised within particular industries and areas, might develop as a result of elements of mismatch within the labour market. These could not be remedied directly by means of demand management; and, indeed, if a solution was sought in a further raising of the level of demand, it would only create severe labour shortages elsewhere, and thus give rise to inflationary pressures. Thus, beyond the need for workers to be ready to adapt to changing circumstances, the White Paper envisaged as necessary certain Government measures designed "to bring men to the work and the work to men". (24) It is here that the potential for an active manpower policy role can be identified within the more general strategy that was articulated. However, little was said in the White Paper to encourage the development of such a policy.

The primary means of overcoming problems of regional mismatch was to be a regional policy of encouraging the development and diversification of industry within those areas which were known to be particularly vulnerable to unemployment. (25) These were to be designated 'development areas'. While the main thrust of Government policy was thus to be directed towards the movement of industry to the areas in which concentrations of surplus labour existed, measures were also to be taken to remove some of the obstacles to the geographical mobility of labour. (26) These were to include the provision of cheap rented accommodation and the payment of resettlement allowances for those moving to new areas under approved schemes. The employment services were to have some involvement in this latter aspect of regional policy, but in general

the White Paper made no attempt to reappraise their role within the context of the new employment policy, and no new emphasis was given to the development of their placement function as a means of reducing friction in the operation of the labour market.

With regard to the role of the training services, (27) it was proposed that the Government should provide training facilities in order to help tackle the problem of occupational mismatch, but the main responsibility for training employees was to remain with their employers. All that was undertaken, was that the Government would continue to provide training schemes after the immediate postwar need for resettlement had passed, if this were deemed necessary in order to retrain workers being laid off by declining industries so as to fit them for jobs in expanding industries. As it happened, from 1946 onwards the training facilities used for resettlement were rapidly rundown, and the training services returned to their traditionally limited social policy objectives, largely concerned with providing for the disabled. (28)

In the transitional period of reconstruction immediately following the end of the war, it was not envisaged by the White Paper that it would be necessary to employ a macro-economic policy of demand management in order to secure a high level of employment. (29) During this period, large numbers of men and women were to be demobilised from the armed forces or released from military production, but the demand for labour created by the huge task of reconstruction would be at least as great. Also, in the short-term, the Government was to retain many of its war-time powers of direct intervention in the labour market in order to ensure that the vast supply of labour becoming available was directed to where it was most needed. In fact, the main fear was that during the hectic initial phase of reconstruction labour shortages would appear: however, it was also envisaged that patches of localised unemployment might develop simultaneously. Consequently, the measures listed above that were designed to overcome mismatch within the labour market, were initially to be introduced during this transitional period immediately following the end of the war;

they were then to continue after the more short-term measures of direct Government intervention had been removed, and were subsequently to become an adjunct of the longer term policy of demand management. (30)

In the first twenty years that followed the war, both major political parties when in Government by and large upheld the commitment undertaken in the White Paper, and gave priority to the maintenance of a high level of employment in their economic policies. Furthermore, in the years that followed the initial period of upheaval at the end of the war, the technique of demand management appeared to work remarkably well, at least if judged by the levels of employment achieved. Thus between 1948 and 1966 unemployment averaged only 1.7% and almost never exceeded 3%. (31)

However, by the middle of the 1950s, concern was beginning to be felt about the rate of inflation that appeared to be associated with the success of full employment policy. Between 1946 and 1955 price levels rose by about 50%, (32) a modest increase by modern standards, but at the time it was considered to be a sufficiently serious problem to demand a Government response. Thus in 1956 the Conservative Government published a White Paper entitled The Economic Implications of Full Employment. In the 1944 White Paper, the importance of price stability had been noted as a condition for the success of a policy of sustained economic growth and full employment. What this new document did was to bring the issue of inflation into a position of central importance alongside, and in opposition to, economic growth and full employment. Thus it was argued that, if inflation was allowed to continue, it would affect the competitiveness of British exports, discourage investment, cause social instability and injustice, and thereby undermine the conditions necessary for economic growth, sustained prosperity and full employment. (33) The main element causing inflation was identified as being rising incomes, whether in the form of wages or dividends. (34) Excessive income rises were, in their turn, said to be the result of trade unions and businessmen exploiting the prosperous conditions necessary to maintain full employment. (35) If this continued to happen, price stability and full employment would become incompatible, and whichever were chosen, full employment

would be lost in the long run; but this was not inevitable. The solution sought by the White Paper lay in mutual self-restraint and co-operation between management and labour: self-restraint "in making wage claims and fixing profit margins and prices, so that total money income rises no faster than total output";⁽³⁶⁾ and co-operation in maintaining good industrial relations and increasing productivity, so as to raise the total level of output.

The tendency of opposition between stable prices and full employment drawn attention to by the 1956 White Paper was subsequently given a more precise academic formulation in what became known as the 'Phillips curve'. In an influential article published in November 1958,⁽³⁷⁾ A.W. Phillips claimed to be able to prove from available statistical evidence that the rate of change of money wage rates in the United Kingdom between 1861 and 1957 could be explained by the level of unemployment and the rate of change of unemployment, except in or immediately after those years in which there was a rapid rise in import prices. Furthermore, he gave the relationship between the rate of change of money wage rates and the level of unemployment a precise quantitative value, in the form of an equation representing the curve that he had derived from plotting the two relevant sets of statistics on a graph.⁽³⁸⁾ The implication was that for any given level of unemployment there was a corresponding 'natural' rate of wage inflation. Thus, in theory, it was possible to specify a level of unemployment at which inflation would be eliminated, so long as there was not the disturbance of a rapid rise of import prices. Phillips in fact suggested that a 5½% rate of unemployment would be associated with the level of aggregate demand necessary to keep wage levels stable, and that a 2½% rate of unemployment would be sufficient for product prices to be stabilised, assuming a 2% per annum increase in productivity.⁽³⁹⁾

The theory behind the Phillips curve was a simple neo-classical extrapolation of the law of supply and demand, applied to the operation of the labour market.⁽⁴⁰⁾ If demand for labour exceeded

supply, as would have to be the case for the maintenance of full employment, then the price of labour would be bound to rise. As we have seen, the tactic of the 1956 White Paper to escape the inevitable incompatibility between full employment and stable prices that is implied here, was to appeal to both trade unions and businessmen for self-restraint in forgoing any bargaining or price-setting advantages that the Government's maintenance of high levels of demand might give them.

Over the years that followed the publication of the White Paper, Governments tried to apply various forms of prices and incomes restraint, both voluntary and statutory. All proved to be unpopular and difficult to administer, and the problem of inflation remained unsolved. The development of an active manpower policy that started in the 1960s can be understood as an attempt to find an alternative or additional means of altering the terms of the relationship that was thought to hold good in the form of the Phillips curve.⁽⁴¹⁾

The case for developing the role of the manpower services as an active adjunct of economic policy was put explicitly in these terms by the Organisation For Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.), which, during the 1960s, was lobbying internationally for the adoption of an active manpower policy as a new instrument of economic management.⁽⁴²⁾ The argument took the following form. The difficulties being encountered in the administration of an incomes policy did not mean that the relationship between unemployment and inflation implied by the Phillips curve was unavoidable. Much of the inflation taken account of by Phillips in plotting his curve was in fact 'unnecessary'. It was not the inevitable result of the level of demand required to sustain a given level of employment, but rather the product of the inflationary pressures allowed to build up around particular labour shortages and 'bottlenecks' in the labour market. If these could be eliminated, or at least ameliorated, then the Phillips curve could in effect be moved downwards, so that a lower rate of wage inflation would correspond with a given rate of unemployment; and this would be

achieved independently of the application of an incomes policy. What was required then was that supply and demand should be matched more evenly across every area of the labour market: the instruments of an active manpower policy were seen as capable of providing the mechanism by which this could be done.

First, the employment services could add to the general fluidity and efficiency of the operation of the labour market. This could be achieved through the further development of the placement function, which had originally been considered their primary function, but had since been pushed into the background by their responsibility for the administration of unemployment benefit. Secondly, the training services could be developed to play a more active role in overcoming the various problems of occupational mismatch in the labour market. And thirdly, working in conjunction with the two primary manpower services on matters affecting the location of jobs and labour, regional policy could be used more directly to counter mismatch of a geographical nature.

If these three elements of an active manpower policy could be applied successfully in conjunction with each other, it was believed that it would be possible to run the economy at a lower level of aggregate demand without thereby creating more unemployment. However, it was not only the level of demand that was a matter of concern, the degree of fluctuation was also perceived as an important aspect of the problem. Since the early 1950s, the attempts to apply demand management through monetary and fiscal means had given rise to an increasingly erratic pattern of growth in the economy, commonly referred to as 'stop-go'. Each time the Government attempted to stimulate growth in the economy, the economy would rapidly 'overheat', inflation going out of control and foreign trade out of balance. The Government would then be compelled to introduce deflationary measures in order to regain control and balance, thereby cancelling out much of what had been achieved during the period of rapid growth. But deflation could not be maintained for long if the commitment to full employment

was to be honoured, and so the cycle would soon have to be started up again with some new form of reflation. In the short term, the rapid repetition of this cyclical pattern might enable the avoidance of the unacceptable extremes of unemployment and inflation, but in the long run, it was a wasteful and inadequate way of maintaining the kind of sustained economic growth on which all the postwar economic policy objectives were ultimately premised.

Once again a solution appeared to be offered by the elements of an active manpower policy that were listed above, since again the underlying problem was identified as being the inefficiency and imbalances of the labour market.⁽⁴³⁾ Thus it was thought that cyclical 'overheating' was another result of labour shortages and bottlenecks which acted as the foci of inflationary pressures and, at the same time, blocked the growth of domestic output that was necessary to maintain the balance of foreign trade during a period of demand reflation. Consequently, an active manpower policy aimed at removing elements of both structural mismatch and frictional drag from the labour market could be expected, not only to mitigate the underlying inflationary tendency of the economy, but also to smooth its cyclical pattern of growth. Furthermore, the timing of the implementation of this policy, in particular its training element, could be directly integrated into a counter-cyclical strategy of demand management. Thus, the time to step up investment in training programmes would be on the downswing of the cycle, when demand was low. At this point, such spending would contribute as an element of the reflationary policy necessary to lift the economy out of its slump and, at the same time, bring direct relief to some of those finding themselves unemployed during the lull in demand. Then, when the economy moved back into a phase of growth, there would be a supply of newly trained labour available to cover the areas where labour shortages were likely to occur, thus removing one of the major obstacles to sustained and non-inflationary economic growth.

In short, the active manpower policy that was being developed in Britain from the 1960s onwards can be understood as an attempt

to 'fine-tune' the policy of demand management that had been adopted by the 1944 White Paper in pursuit of its commitment to full employment. Since the beginning of the 1950s, demand management, implemented primarily by means of monetary and fiscal controls, had proved an unwieldy and insensitive mechanism for steering the economy: it had given rise to unnecessary tension between the twin objectives of full employment and stable prices, and had encouraged the erratic cycle of 'stop-go'. The development of an active economic role for manpower policy, it was hoped, would make it possible to run the economy at a lower level of aggregate demand without thereby creating more unemployment, and thus help to achieve sustained economic growth without the wasteful fluctuations of 'stop-go'.

The extent to which these ideas were new should not be exaggerated. It will be remembered that the potential role for an active manpower policy had been adumbrated in the 1944 White Paper. Now, in the 1960s, what had been outlined in 1944 was in effect being reactivated in a new and more explicit form. This was necessary because, in the intervening years, the potential contribution of the manpower services to broader economic policy had in practice been neglected.

Following the intense activity of the postwar demobilisation period, both the employment and training services were rapidly rundown, and continued to decline until the early 1960s.⁽⁴⁴⁾ A strongly interventionist role was necessary for the employment service during demobilisation, but thereafter controls were relaxed and eventually removed when the Control of Engagements Order was revoked in 1950. For a brief period in the early 50s some attempt was made to ensure that all vacancies were notified officially, but then, in the decade following, the volume of adult placings was allowed to fall back by over 40%. Some reference has already been made to the neglect of the training services that followed their rapid expansion immediately postwar. A few figures may help to emphasise the point. The number of places at Government training centres reached a peak of over 23,000 in

1946. By 1948 this number had been reduced by 75%, and thereafter it continued to decline, so that by 1962 there only existed 10% of the places there had been in 1946. Finally, some effort was put into regional policy during this period, but the measures taken to encourage capital investment in development areas had little success in reducing the regional disparities between levels of employment. (45)

The early 1960s saw a new interest being taken in the role of planning in the promotion of economic growth. This was marked by the setting-up of the National Economic Development Council in 1962, and its publication, a year later, of a report entitled Conditions Favourable to Faster Growth. (46) This document placed a new emphasis on various aspects of manpower policy, in particular training and regional development. It is from this period and context that it is possible to trace the development - all be it unsystematic - of the different elements of an active manpower policy.

1962/3 proved to be the turning point for the Government provision of training, the expansion that took place thereafter being indicative of the adoption of a new role beyond the limited 'social' objectives that had been characteristic of the programmes of the 1950s. (47) Thus, between 1962 and 1971 the numbers being catered for in Government Training Centres increased fourfold. Also an important step forward with regard to the regulation of training carried out in industry was made by the 1964 Industrial Training Act. This involved the establishment of the Industrial Training Boards (I.T.Bs), tripartite regulatory bodies, each with responsibility for maintaining and improving the quality and quantity of training provided within a particular sector of industry, and each empowered to administer a grant levy system to ensure the equitable distribution of training costs between individual concerns.

No major reforms were made to the employment services during the 1960s; however, it is possible to trace a significant change of

attitude reflecting the growing influence of the idea of an active manpower policy. Indicative of this attitudinal change was an article, entitled 'Changing role for the Employment Service', that was published in the Labour Gazette in 1966.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Here it was argued that the main emphasis of the work of the service should be moved away from the administration of unemployment benefit, and put back onto the employment placement function. Some minor reforms in line with this change of emphasis were announced at the time, but the main importance of this restatement of what was the original objective of the employment service was to be in preparing the ground for the more radical reforms that were to follow in the early 1970s.

The impact of the development of the concept of an active manpower policy can also be detected in the new emphasis that was given to regional policy during the 1960s. This not only involved a sizeable increase in the amount spent by Government on regional development, but also the introduction of new mechanisms to ensure that more of this spending was directly linked to the creation of jobs. Previously regional policy had been predominantly concerned with the encouragement of capital intensive investment in the development areas. The Regional Employment Premium, which was introduced in 1967, sought to stimulate the creation of employment by the more direct means of subsidising the wage costs of employers in the specified areas.⁽⁴⁹⁾

Three other measures that illustrate the development of manpower planning during the 1960s should be mentioned: redundancy payments, earnings-related unemployment benefit, and the Selective Employment Tax, all of which were introduced between 1965 and 1966 in connection with the Labour Government's ill-fated National Plan. It was a commonly held view at the time that the prospects for economic growth would be enhanced, if some of the skilled labour currently being employed in the less productive areas of the economy could be 'shaken out' and redeployed more productively elsewhere. All three of the measures listed above were designed to assist and encourage this process. Redundancy payments and

earnings-related benefits, it was hoped, would make workers more willing to accept losing their jobs and having to look for new forms of employment. The Selective Employment Tax was designed to encourage employment in the manufacturing industries in preference to the service industries, working on the questionable assumption that the former would make a greater contribution to economic growth. In so far as these measures had any noticeable effects, research carried out at the time showed that they were more successful in the negative function of shaking out labour, than in the positive function of redeploying it more productively elsewhere.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Thus, while in a certain sense they represented an advance in manpower planning techniques, at the same time, they highlighted the need for a greater degree of co-ordination of policy.

The consultative documents previously referred to, People and Jobs (1971) and Training for the Future (1972), can now be understood in terms of the requirements of the further development of an active manpower policy, as can the criticisms that were made of them which led up to the MSC being superimposed over the two separate agencies. People and Jobs, as well as proposing that the Employment Services Agency should be hived off from the Department of Employment, recommended that the administration of the employment and benefit services should be separated at the local level. This, it was hoped, would allow the employment service to develop and expand its active placement function, unencumbered by the image and responsibility associated with the dole office. Further to this end, the new employment service was to be relocated in modern-style self-service Job Centres which were to be separate and distinct from the old benefit offices.

Training for the Future contained two other main proposals besides that for the establishment of a separate Training Services Agency. The first of these was for the expansion and diversification of Government provided training through the introduction of the Training Opportunities Scheme (T.O.P.S.). The second was for the phasing out of the levy system operated by the ITBs. While the introduction

of TOPS clearly represented a positive step forward in the development of the instruments of an active manpower policy, the abolition of the ITBs' power to raise a training levy was viewed by some, particularly those associated with the labour movement, as a retrograde step.⁽⁵¹⁾ Under the pressure of their criticisms, the Government did eventually compromise, and only curtailed the ITBs' use of the levy rather than eliminating it altogether. However, this does still illustrate an important point about the concept of an active manpower policy. The object of such a policy was never to supplant the normal workings of the labour market, but rather, with the minimal amount of intervention necessary, to remove any irregularities or blockages that might interfere with the efficiency of its normal operation. It was then always a doctrine of limited intervention, and this will be seen later to be a feature of the philosophy of the MSC, the organisation that was given responsibility for the development of a comprehensive manpower policy.

Apart from the criticisms that were made of the proposal to abolish the ITB training levy, the main criticism of the two documents was that, while they made an important contribution to the separate development of two of the primary instruments necessary for the implementation of an active manpower policy, they failed to establish an adequate institutional structure for the co-ordination of their usage in such a policy.⁽⁵²⁾ The idea of some form of national manpower commission had emerged from the debate about active manpower policy that took place during the 1960s. Probably the first reference to the need for such a body in this country was made in a report called 'Perspectives in Manpower Planning' which was published in 1967 by the Edinburgh Group of the Institute of Personnel Management.⁽⁵³⁾ There it was proposed that an independent statutory body should be set up to co-ordinate manpower statistics and forecasting. Subsequently the TUC played a leading role in developing the idea that such a body should also be given planning and administrative responsibilities. Then, at the time of the debate concerning the separate hiving off of the employment and training service agencies, the argument for setting over them

a co-ordinating commission was put powerfully by the influential labour market expert, Santosh Mukherjee. (54)

In a Political and Economic Planning (P.E.P.) broadsheet entitled Making Labour Markets Work, Mukherjee compared the Swedish and British systems of manpower policy administration. One of the main conclusions of his analysis was that the comparative success of the Swedish system relied on the co-ordinating role played by an autonomous agency called the Labour Market Board. If Britain was serious about implementing an active manpower policy, it would be necessary to create some equivalent institutional framework. Reforming the employment and training services was not enough, the co-ordination of an active manpower policy required that they should be given an organisational unity.

This argument gained wide support and, as we have seen, eventually prevailed. The establishment of the MSC thus represented a further point of advance in the development of the institutional machinery required for the implementation of an active manpower policy. It should be noted, however, that the Commission was not endowed with as broad a range of competence as its Swedish equivalent. (55) In particular, it was not given control over the allocation of regional development assistance which it should by now be apparent is integrally related to the implementation of an active manpower policy. Nevertheless, it was hoped that the new organisation would be able to develop the capacity to plan and implement a comprehensive manpower policy, combining both economic and social objectives, the interests of industry and the interests of individual people.

3. The MSC, Corporatism and 'Hiving Off'

Beyond the specific trend of the development of an active manpower policy, it is possible to identify two broader trends within the institutional organisation of politics and administration that were influential in determining the form that the MSC eventually took. The first of these was a trend in the development of functional representation within political structures that is generally labelled as 'corporatism'. The second was a trend of administrative reform associated with the process of 'hiving off'. As will become apparent, there was some connection between these two trends, in so far as the latter could be viewed as a means of enabling the furtherance of the former.

Within modern political analysis corporatism is a contested and ambiguous term. (56) It is not my intention in this context to get caught up in the complex wrangle that has been carried on between various schools of political thought over the precise meaning and correct usage of the concept. Nevertheless, given the confusion that presently exists, it will be necessary at least to explain how I intend the term to be understood in the account that follows.

The term corporatism was originally used to describe a certain body of political and social thought that emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century. (57) In contrast to both liberalism and socialism it laid emphasis on the organic unity and class harmony of society, and it attempted to define a system of political and social organisation in accordance with these principles. Influenced by the hierachical and functional organisation of the mediaeval estates, the proponents of corporatism sought to reproduce the organic unity that was assumed to have been characteristic of such pre-capitalist societies, by means of a new hierachical and functional form of organisation based on the socio-economic divisions of contemporary capitalist society. Under such a system,

the relationship between the state and individual would be hierarchically mediated through functionally based sectoral organisations fulfilling both representative and administrative functions.

These ideas subsequently became associated with fascist ideology, and in this context were put into practice as a means by which it was attempted to enforce totalitarian state control over society. Understandably, this association with fascism left corporatism discredited as a political doctrine in the postwar era. Nevertheless, since the Second World War, there have been certain characteristic developments in the political structures of 'liberal democracies' that, although not explicitly put forward in corporatist terms by their adherents, have borne a sufficient resemblance to the original ideas of corporatism for various political commentators to have revived the term as a means of description and analysis.

Broadly speaking, the characteristic feature of these developments to which the label corporatism has been applied has been the incorporation of representatives of management and labour within the institutional framework of the state as a strategy associated with the extension of the scope of state intervention in the economy. Unlike in the context of fascism, this has taken place voluntarily, typically through the establishment of various forms of tripartite body, operating at first mainly in an advisory capacity, but subsequently becoming directly involved in the policy-making process.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Thus, in most so-called liberal democracies, a political process based on the establishment of consensus between the state and representatives of the major functional sectional interests within society has grown up alongside the more traditional liberal democratic institutions based on geographical parliamentary representation.

These developments constitute the generally accepted core of the descriptive reference of most modern theoretical formulations of corporatism: the major areas of disagreement are with regard to the extent and significance of such developments. Do they

constitute a comprehensive new system, or are they only partial and dependent developments? If they do constitute a new system, on what plane of analysis is it to be classified - a new system of interest mediation, a new state form, or new mode of economic production (a post-capitalist society?) ? And if not a new system, how do such developments fit in with, and how do they moderate, the nature of existing systems at these different levels? (59)

As already indicated, these are not questions that I intend to attempt to answer in this context. My object is rather merely to place the origins of the Manpower Services Commission within the trend of developments that has formed the descriptive core of the modern analysis of corporatism in Britain. My use of the term corporatism will therefore be restricted to the minimal descriptive reference outlined above, leaving open for the moment any questions of wider analytical significance.

The origins of corporatist tendencies in British political life have been traced back as far as the extension of state intervention in the economy that was necessitated by the First World War. (60) Throughout the economic depression, mass unemployment and industrial conflict of the twenties and thirties various forms of tripartite consultation continued to operate, and were indeed further consolidated. Examples of particular relevance to this account were the National Advisory Councils for Juvenile Employment which were established in November 1927 by the Minister of Labour, and on which were represented trade unions and employers, as well as educational interests and the Ministry of Labour. (61) The Second World War gave a further stimulus to the growth of corporatist political structures in this country. Leading trade union and business figures were co-opted into the Government, and a number of important tripartite consultative bodies, such as the National Joint Advisory Council and the National Production Advisory Council on Industry, were established to assist in the wartime mobilisation of the economy. (62) In the years immediately following the end of the war, when it was necessary to maintain a high degree of

direct government intervention in the economy, these various tripartite advisory bodies were kept intact, and new ones such as the National Investment Council and the Economic Planning Board were formed by the Labour Government.⁽⁶³⁾ Between 1948 and 1950 a wages policy was maintained on the basis of voluntary restraint on the part of the unions.⁽⁶⁴⁾ However, in general from 1947 onwards, with the adoption of Keynesian macro-economic policies of demand management, the mechanisms for more detailed state intervention in the running of the economy were largely abandoned,⁽⁶⁵⁾ and consequently plans made for the extension of tripartite development councils into each sector of industry were passed over largely unimplemented.⁽⁶⁶⁾ Thus, the withdrawal of the state from active intervention in the labour market that has been described as dating from this same period was one aspect of a more general retreat from detailed state intervention, with which was associated a temporary halt in the growth of corporatist political structures.

The significance of the 1956 White Paper in calling attention to certain inherent problems, notably the stimulation of inflationary pressures, associated with the unmediated implementation of a macro-economic policy of demand management has already been referred to in the account of the development of an active manpower policy. It will be remembered that a solution was sought to these problems in co-operation between management and labour, both in the restraint of incomes, and in the improvement of industrial relations and productivity. In this exhortation for co-operation can be understood the stimulus for the new growth of corporatist institutions that took place during the 1960s in the areas of incomes policy, industrial relations and economic planning, including manpower policy.⁽⁶⁷⁾

The details of these developments need not concern us, except in so far as they relate directly to manpower policy. When previously examining the development of active manpower policy during this period, it was explained as a possible supplement or alternative to incomes policy in the fight against inflation. Now, looking

from the angle of the development of corporatism, what needs to be understood is that both these approaches, incomes policy and active manpower policy, involved an extension of state intervention at the micro-economic level in an attempt to supplement and rectify the operation of Keynesian demand management at the macro-economic level. Keynesian policy, although itself constituting an extension of state intervention, was essentially a means of indirect manipulation rather than of direct control. The various correctives being considered from the late fifties onwards all required a more direct and detailed form of state intervention. However, the simple unilateral imposition of the necessary micro-economic controls by the state was not generally considered to be an acceptable means of procedure in peace-time (and in so far as it was subsequently attempted, in statutory incomes policy for example, it was to prove more trouble than it was worth to enforce). Hence, there was a need to develop new political structures through which the requisite degree of intervention and control could be achieved on the basis of co-operation and consensus rather than coercion.

Thus, it is possible to understand the development of corporatism during this period in terms of the same search for a way out of the apparent contradiction between full employment and stable prices that provided the motive force for the development of active manpower policy: (68) in this sense they can be thought of as parallel developments. Yet, in another sense they were developments on different planes, active manpower policy being concerned with a particular area of policy, corporatism being a more generalised form of policy-making, and thus they were capable of coming together as form and content in the same institutions.

In 1958 the National Joint Advisory Council published under the title of Training for Skill a report made by the Carr Committee on industrial training. (69) While reaffirming the conventional wisdom that 'industry knows best', it proposed that a tripartite Industrial Training Council should be established to act in an

advisory capacity, encouraging the qualitative and quantitative development of training. This body was duly set up and operated with modest success. However, in the context of the early development of active manpower policy that has already been described, the need was soon recognised for a further extension of state intervention in industrial training, and this was to take the form of the tripartite Industrial Training Boards.

Some reference has already been made to the revival of interest in economic planning that took place in the early 1960s and the stimulus that it gave to the development of active manpower policy. This revival of economic planning was accompanied by a rapid growth of new institutional forms built on the tripartite principle. Foremost was the National Economic Development Council (N.E.D.C.) which was established by the Conservatives in 1962 to provide a central tripartite forum for the discussion of economic planning.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Subsequently Harold Wilson's Labour Government was to demonstrate its enthusiasm for this form of corporatist planning mechanism by setting up similar tripartite bodies at both sectoral and regional levels - the Economic Development Committees and the Regional Economic Planning Councils respectively. Within the sphere of manpower policy the establishment of the Central Training Council and the Industrial Training Boards under the 1964 Industrial Training Act may be viewed as equivalent corporatist developments. The Central Training Council, as another tripartite advisory body, did not mark a particularly important advance in relation to the Industrial Training Council that it replaced. However, the Industrial Training Boards, with their statutory power to administer grant levy schemes in their respective sectors, may be regarded as representing a significant development of tripartism in the administration and regulation of manpower policy.

The extension of state intervention within the economy during the 1960s provided the stimulus not only for the proliferation of such tripartite institutions, but also for a complementary phase of institutional review and reform within the administrative apparatus of the central state.⁽⁷¹⁾ One product of this was the

emergence of the policy of 'hiving off' during the early seventies.

In 1966 a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Lord Fulton to examine the structure, recruitment and management of the Civil Service. One of the committee's main recommendations was that, "in the interest of efficiency, the principles of accountable management should be applied to the organisation of the work of departments."⁽⁷²⁾ This, it was explained, meant "the clear allocation of responsibility and authority to accountable units with defined objectives."⁽⁷³⁾ However, it was also recognised that the application of such principles to the Civil Service might be impeded by the requirements of ministerial responsibility and the existence of problems overlapping between different departments. Accordingly, the Committee took note of the opinion expressed by certain well-informed observers that some large-scale operations could be run more effectively if they were 'hived off' from the direct control of government departments and entrusted to independent boards or corporations.⁽⁷⁴⁾

Significantly, the Report made reference to the Swedish system of administration in this context.⁽⁷⁵⁾ The main feature identified was the separation of functions between ministries and agencies. Ministries were not directly responsible for the execution of policies, but acted principally as secretariats to ministers, and consequently required comparatively small numbers of staff. The main responsibility for the management and operation of policies was invested in independent statutory agencies (one of which was the Labour Market Board), and it was in these organisations that the bulk of civil servants were employed. Thus, 'hiving off' was in a sense the central organisational principle of the Swedish system, and the Fulton Report expressed its admiration of the way in which the system worked.⁽⁷⁶⁾

However, such issues concerning the reorganisation of government machinery went beyond the terms of reference of the committee,

and therefore it had to be content with making a recommendation that a further review should be made of the feasibility of extending the application of 'hiving off' within the organisation of British government and administration.⁽⁷⁷⁾ In fact no such review was ever carried out. Nevertheless, the Fulton Report provided the stimulus for a piecemeal extension of the application of the principle during the early seventies.

Before explaining the circumstances in which the related trends of corporatism and 'hiving off' came together in the formation of the MSC, it is necessary to sound a note of caution about the former of these two trends. In attempting to summarise, and direct towards a particular purpose, the description of a complex trend such as that of the development of corporatism, there is always the danger that the impression is given that the process of events was more straightforward and simple than was actually the case. It therefore needs to be emphasised that the development of corporatist political processes through the sixties and seventies was not a simple linear progression. Rather it was one strategy amongst others resorted to by Governments during this period.⁽⁷⁸⁾ It may have turned out to be the prevalent strategy, but it was still possible for Governments, at least periodically, to impose deflationary policies at the expense of rising unemployment, or to accept rising levels of inflation, or to attempt the unilateral imposition of statutory controls. Matters are further complicated by the fact that it cannot be assumed that there was always a parallel development of corporatism in different areas of policy-making: indeed, a reversal in one area of policy could provide the stimulus for development in another. Thus at various points it is possible to identify definite withdrawals of Government interest and involvement in corporatist processes, sometimes just in specific areas of policy, at other times on a more generalised level.

The revival of economic planning in the 1960s came to its climax in the National Plan that was launched by the Labour Government in

September 1965. The plan also represented a highpoint in the development of tripartism in a number of areas of policy. Broad tripartite agreement to the plans for economic growth was achieved through the NEDC, and the associated network of regional and sectoral tripartite planning bodies was established. Furthermore, by holding out the prospect of rapid economic growth and promising measures to achieve social justice in the distribution of the new wealth created, the Government was able to secure a joint tripartite declaration of intent (December 1964) in which, as their side of the bargain, the employers and unions committed themselves to voluntary prices and incomes restraint, and to efforts to improve their levels of productivity. Machinery to monitor this prices and incomes policy was subsequently established in the form of the National Board for Prices and Incomes (N.B.P.I., 1965), which originally was intended to function merely on the basis of moral pressure and persuasion. (79)

The consensus achieved during this period relied on the prospect of repaid economic growth that was held out by the Government as the reward for co-operation from which all would benefit. 'Restraint' was not so much a matter of holding incomes down as planning their sustained growth. Thus the National Plan set an ambitious target of a 25% increase in national output between 1964 and 1970. (80) However, such growth proved impossible to sustain and within a year, under the pressure of a balance of payments and sterling crisis, the Government forced to abandon the plan and to impose severe deflationary measures (July 1966). (81)

Even before this dramatic turnabout, the voluntary aspect of the incomes policy accompanying the plan had been under severe pressure, and the Government had found it necessary to introduce a statutory element into the powers of the NBPI. (82) Inevitably, once the plan was abandoned, the wider corporatist consensus that had been constructed around its promise of rapid and sustained economic growth could no longer be maintained. Consequently a full statutory incomes policy had to be imposed, with an initial six months standstill on all income increases, to be followed by a further six months of severe restraint. (83) At the same time, the

rapid rise in unemployment triggered off by the deflationary policies of July 1966 can be seen as bringing to bear market forces on the control of incomes. Thus, with the promise of economic growth on which tripartite consensus had been founded proving unrealistic, the Government was forced, on the one hand, to resort to unprecedented - in peace-time - statist intervention in the details of income distribution, and on the other, to take a substantial step away from the postwar commitment to full employment. Meanwhile, the tripartite planning bodies such as the NEDC and its regional and sectoral equivalents continued to exist, but only a peripheral forums for dialogue and consultation in the process of economic policy-making. (84)

The Labour Government was to continue with some form of statutory incomes policy for the rest of its term. Furthermore, it was to attempt to launch what was a new statist, as opposed to corporatist, initiative in the field of industrial relations - the 1969 Industrial Relations Bill. (85) However, both these forms of direct state intervention caused popular resentment, particularly amongst the trade unions, and, after the Government had been forced to back down on the Industrial Relations Bill, there were also signs of a move back towards a voluntary bargained form of incomes control more in line with a corporatist approach. (86)

The idea of 'hiving off' was taken up by the incoming Conservative Government in 1970 which was pledged in its manifesto to reducing the size of central government and the civil service. (87) The DE was a prime target for this form of reorganisation, a number of its services being considered suitable for 'hiving off'. (88) Thus between 1974 and 1975 (the Labour Government taking over from where the Conservatives left off), both the Health and Safety Commission and the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service, as well as the MSC, were set up to take-over functions which had previously been carried out within the Department of Employment.

As has already been explained, the employment and training services were originally to be hived off as separate agencies. The tripartite advisory council which was to co-ordinate them did not mark a significant advance of the corporatist principle in the administration of manpower policy over the Central Training Council that it was to replace. In fact, given the proposals to abolish the levying powers of the ITBs, the original plans for the reorganisation of manpower services as expressed in People and Jobs and Training for the Future may be considered to have constituted a reversal of corporatist development in this field of policy. This can perhaps be understood more fully in the wider context of the prevailing climate of industrial relations at the time when these plans were being drawn up.

The Conservatives came back into office in 1970 with a commitment to remove all forms of incomes policy and to draw back from more detailed state intervention in the economy in general.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Instead they were to rely on market sanctions to regulate the economy, while at the same time introducing new industrial relations legislation to restrict the bargaining power of the unions.⁽⁹⁰⁾ The first aspect of this policy marked a new stage in the slide away from the commitment to full employment which had started with the deflationary measures carried out by the previous Labour Government in July 1966. By January 1972 the symbolic figure of one million unemployed had been exceeded. The second aspect of the policy, which took form as the 1971 Industrial Relations Act, can be understood in corporatist terms, but only as an attempt to impose a highly statist form of corporatism that failed.⁽⁹¹⁾ The purpose of the legislation was to make the legitimacy of trade union organisation and activity subject to the sanctioning of a detailed legal framework imposed by the state. However there was no consensus behind this policy.⁽⁹²⁾ The trade unions were bitterly opposed to it as an incursion on their traditional autonomy, and the struggle against the Act gave rise to the most serious period of industrial confrontation since the 1926 General Strike. The Government was able to force the legislation through Parliament, but the trade unions were able to render the Act inoperable within three months of its full implementation in February 1972. They

simply refused to co-operate with the terms of the new legislation and the Government, lacking the will to attempt to enforce the sanctions that it had provided itself with, was left with no alternative but to back down. The legislation remained on the statute book for a further two years, but it was ineffect 'put on ice'. (93)

What can now be seen is that the original plans for the reorganisation of the manpower services, at least those expressed in Training for the Future, were formulated in the following context: first, of a Government committed to rolling back the extent of state intervention in the economy and letting market forces operate even at the expense of rising unemployment; and secondly, of a breakdown of relations between the Government and the trade union movement unprecedented in the postwar period.

The Government's retreat from its stand on the Industrial Relations Act was one aspect of a more generalised 'U-turn' in its policies, which interestingly enough coincided with its change of heart over the idea of setting up a body such as the MSC. In the face of the (then) alarming level of unemployment, the unprecedented wave of industrial militancy, and the considerable pressure being placed on sterling, the Heath Government was forced to abandon its strategy of laissez faire economics and legally regulated industrial relations in favour of the pattern of incomes policy and tripartite talks which it had originally spurned. (94) Between July and November 1972 the Government organised a series of meetings with delegates from the TUC and CBI at which bargaining took place over a wide range of policies in an attempt to secure an agreement on which a voluntary incomes policy could be based. It would seem that during this process, the establishment of the Manpower Services Commission was put forward as a comparatively uncontroversial concession which could be granted to the TUC. (95) The talks on pay eventually broke down, but the commitment to set up the Commission survived as one of their permanent legacies.

4. Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy

In his introduction to the first Annual Report of the MSC, the new Chairman, Dennis Barnes, referred to three main areas of work on which the Commission had been concentrating its efforts over the previous year.⁽⁹⁶⁾ First there was the process of taking over and approving the programmes of the two agencies. Secondly contingency plans had been made against a further rise in the level of unemployment. Thirdly the task of developing a comprehensive manpower policy had been embarked upon.

The manner in which the MSC had been superimposed over the employment and training agencies almost as an afterthought was reflected in the comparative independence that they enjoyed during this early period of the Commission's life.⁽⁹⁷⁾ The main features of the programmes of the two agencies had already been settled upon, and at this stage the Commission's role was largely that of giving its formal approval. Thus, the ESA was to continue with its programme of modernisation, the most important feature of which was the introduction of specialised Jobcentres which had already begun in 1973.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Meanwhile, the TSA was to supervise the ITBs' introduction of the new form of levy exemption scheme covering private industrial training, and to continue the expansion and diversification of government training under TOPS.⁽⁹⁹⁾

The capacity of the MSC in the future to take on an effective and positive co-ordinating role in relation to the two agencies depended largely upon the third area of its work referred to above, the development of a comprehensive manpower policy. At the time of its creation, the criticism was levelled at the new Commission by some of those who had been actively lobbying for such a body that it had not been endowed with the powers and resources necessary for the collection, co-ordination and processing of manpower intelligence on a scale adequate for the planning of such a comprehensive manpower policy.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ In response to this kind of criticism the first Annual Report acknowledges the need for the Commission to become,

"an authoritative centre for manpower intelligence...in a

position to express constructive views on any policies affecting the labour market and to propose practical solutions to problems which may range from the short-term to long-term fundamental questions concerning the effective use of the country's manpower resources, whether or not the Commission is itself in a position to take action on them." (101)

A fresh impetus was given to these developments by the new Labour Government which, reflecting the labour movement's general desire for the Commission to take a more active and interventionist role, had pledged in its October 1974 Manifesto, "to transform the MSC into a powerful body responsible for the development and execution of a comprehensive manpower policy." (102) The new Secretary of State, Michael Foot, duly set up a working group to report on how this could be achieved, the eventual outcome of which was the publication of Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy in October 1976.

Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy represented the MSC's first attempt to review publicly its philosophy and strategies. It was also, it will be remembered, the document that announced the formation and the terms of reference of the Holland Working Party. Thus, it naturally presents itself as a link between the account of the origins and philosophy of the MSC that has been presented in this chapter, and the account of the development of the special measures response to unemployment that is to be presented in the next two chapters. In particular, it provides a basis for a summary of the philosophy of the newly created Commission - the philosophy in terms of which it will subsequently be attempted to analyse the objectives of the Youth Opportunities Programme.

Three major themes arise from the account which is presented of the aim of comprehensive manpower policy. Two of these can be understood in terms of active manpower policy; the third relates to corporatism. The first theme is that of the dual function of a comprehensive manpower policy. This is described as follows:

"to enable the country's manpower resources to be developed and to contribute fully to economic well-being; and to ensure that there is available to each worker the opportunities and services he or she needs in order to lead a satisfactory working life.

In consequence, most manpower measures do not have only an economic object (to help industry) or a social one (to help people), but both." (103)

This combination of economic and social objectives, it will be remembered, is the core notion of an active manpower policy.

The second theme is concerned with the role of the MSC in the fulfillment of this dual function, and it involves the definition of a limited conception of state intervention. It is explained that a comprehensive manpower policy does not imply any attempt to take over control of the labour market as a whole. Such is thought to be impossible and unnecessary. What it does imply is a strategic approach that considers policy in relation to an understanding of the total system of the labour market, and goes beyond the limits of a 'fire-fighting' operation to deal with specific short-term problems. Thus, the MSC's role is explained in terms of assisting the workings of the existing market system:

"The Commission's role is to understand the system and its own position in it, and to establish a framework for action in the shape of a network of advice, assistance and encouragement to individuals and employers." (104)

This limited conception of state intervention can be understood as another integral element of active manpower policy. It was never the object of an active manpower policy to substitute itself for the normal operations of the labour market, but rather to supplement, and at times manipulate, these operations in accordance with the dual economic and social objectives mentioned above.

The third theme which arises is that of consensus policy-making. The limitations placed on the MSC's direct interventionary role imply the need for it to work in co-operation with others to secure

its objectives. Consequently, its success is seen to depend upon its ability to involve the major relevant interest groups in the policy-making process, and thereby, establish amongst them a consensus:

"The Commission can be successful in its endeavours only by taking people along with it. In a free society, much the most effective way of securing the commitment of organisations and people to a course of action is to involve them in decisions, and we therefore consider it essential for there to be participation of the major interests concerned, and particularly employers' organisations and trade unions, in the work of the central manpower authority and at many other levels." (105)

This, of course, is merely a restatement of the corporatist principle which we have already seen expressed in the tripartite composition of the Commission.

Summing up, the MSC's conception of itself, as expressed in Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy, may be defined by:

a) the duality of its function in relation to economic and social interests: b) the acceptance of a limited though strategic role of direct intervention in relation to the labour market: and c) the adherence to a consensus model of policy making. This philosophy might be labelled as a form of social democratic corporatism: social democratic in that it expresses the belief that the pursuit of growth and efficiency in a capitalist economy can be rendered compatible with the promotion of the social needs of individuals by means of a limited form of state intervention in the operations of the market mechanism; and corporatist in that it expresses the belief that this limited form of intervention is best carried out with the active involvement of the representatives of the major interest groups concerned, and in particular those of capital and labour, rather than it being imposed by unilateral state activity.

The exact degree of direct intervention entailed by the pursuit of a comprehensive manpower policy is left open in Towards a Comprehensive

Manpower Policy, depending upon certain conditions, notably the persistence of high levels of unemployment.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ It will be remembered that the first Annual Report (1974-75) mentioned the preparation of contingency plans for higher unemployment. Already, by the time that Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy was published in 1976, these had resulted in the implementation of a number of special measures which subsequently were to be reorganised by the Holland Report around the structure of Special Programmes. The major concern of Chapter 4 will be the consideration of how special measures, and YOP in particular, emerged from the context of the philosophy and organisation of the newly established MSC which has just been described. But, before this account can be presented, it will be necessary to introduce another historical thread, that of the history of government responses to unemployment,

Footnotes

1. See Employment Gazette, August 1973, p.733; or for a near contemporary external assessment of the innovation involved, see J. Campling, 'Manpower Services - The New Approach' in Contemporary Review 227 (Nov.75),pp.231-234.
2. See Employment Gazette, August 1972,p.700, for a statement of this two-fold purpose.
3. Employment and Training Act 1973, Chapter 50, HMSO, London, Section 2, subsection (1) p.3.
4. The term 'quango' was originally used to stand for 'quasi-non-governmental organisation'. Strictly speaking, the MSC is a quasi-governmental organisation, and therefore a 'quango'. However, the meaning of the term quango has expanded in general usage to include bodies such as the MSC, and I intend to follow this popular usage rather than sticking rigidly to the definition of the initials.
5. This point is emphasised by D.J. Howells, in his article 'The Manpower Services Commission: The First Five Years', Public Administration Vol.58 Autumn 1980, p.306.
6. See Trades Union Congress, Annual Report and Congress Proceedings 1971 T.U.C. , London,para.96.
7. See Hansard, Vol.838 (5, June 1972), Col 157ff. Secretary of State, Maurice Macmillan, here wards off the suggestion of a national manpower board as follows:
"It would be difficult to move to a national manpower board which was separate from my Department, at any rate at present. As was explained in People and Jobs, one of the major tasks of the employment service at present is paying unemployment benefit and this mustclearly remain within the Department as a function of the Government."
8. A joint statement on behalf of the CBI and TUC was presented to the Secretary of State on June 15, 1972 (Trade Union Congress, Annual Report and Congress Proceedings 1972, T.U.C., London para.88). The Secretary of State agreed to extend the process of consultation in Parliament on August 8 (Hansard, Vol.842, Col.1500 ff.), and the announcementof plans to establish the MSC were made on November 22 (Hansard. Vol. 846, Col.1293ff.)
9. See Hansard, Vol.846, Col.1295.
10. See Hansard, Vol.857 (23 May 1973), Col. 495ff.
11. See Trades Union Congress, Annual Report and Congress Proceedings 1973, T.U.C. London para.71.

12. See for example Mr. Dudley Smith, Under Secretary of State, Hansard Vol.857, Col.554.
13. The main source of historical data in the account of the two manpower services that follows is Brian Showler's The Public Employment Service, Longman, London, 1976, which includes a considerable amount of information about the history of training as well as that of the employment service.
14. See B. Showler, The Public Employment Service, p.21.
15. See ibid., pp.22-23.
16. Brian Showler (op.cit., p.1) makes this distinction in similar terms, though acknowledging that it is merely "an artefact of analysis". It is a commonly used terminology in the official literature on manpower policy. See for example its usage in the brief history of manpower policy given in the MSC's first Annual Report 1974-75, p.3.
17. See B. Showler, op.cit., p.81.
18. See MSC, Annual Report 1974-75, p.3.
19. Employment Policy, Cmnd.6527, HMSO, London, 1944, p.3.
20. See ibid., Chapters IV and V.
21. See ibid., Chapter 1.
22. See ibid., pp.18-19.
23. Ibid., p.16.
24. Ibid., p.20.
25. See ibid., pp.11-13.
26. See ibid., p.15.
27. See ibid., pp.13-15.
28. See B. Showler, op.cit., pp.82-83.
29. See Employment Policy, op.cit., Chapter II.
30. See ibid., p.10.
31. See Alan Deacon, 'Unemployment and Politics in Britain Since 1945' in Showler B. and Sinfield A. (eds.) The Workless State, Martin Robertson, Oxford 1981, p.67. Deacon raises here the question of to what extent this success can be directly attributed to the policies pursued by the Governments involved. It should also be pointed out that the figures given here are national averages, and as such, disguise the continuing existence of marked regional disparities. To give one of the worst

examples, Northern Ireland had an average unemployment rate of approximately 7% over this period (See Michael Stewart, Keynes and After, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1972, p.193.)

32. See The Economic Implications of Full Employment, Cmdnd 9725, HMSO, London, 1956, p.3.
33. See ibid., Chapter V.
34. See ibid., p.5.
35. See ibid., p.11.
36. Ibid.
37. A.W. Phillips, 'The Relation Between Unemployment and the Rate of Change of Money Wage Rates in the United Kingdom, 1861-1957', Economica Vol.25 (N.S.), Nov. 1958, pp.283-299.
38. See ibid., p.290.
39. See ibid., p.299.
40. See ibid., p.283.
41. See MSC, op.cit., p.3.
42. See OECD Recommendation, 'Manpower policy as a means for the promotion of economic growth', OECD, Paris, 1964; and OECD Manpower Policy in the United Kingdom, OECD, Paris, 1970, (in particular p.135ff.).
43. The use of manpower policy and in particular training as a means of refining a counter cyclical policy of demand management was pioneered in Sweden. Santosh Mukherjee's comparative analysis of Swedish and UK manpower policy explains the reasoning behind the Swedes' use of manpower policy. See S. Mukherjee, Making Labour Markets Work, P.E.P. Broadsheet 532, January 1972, Chapter VII in particular.
44. See B. Showler op.cit., pp.24-26 and pp.82-83.
45. See MSC, op.cit., p.4; OECD, Manpower Policy in the United Kingdom, p.208 (1.5); and M. Stewart op.cit., pp.197-202.
46. NEDC., Conditions Favourable to Faster Economic Growth, London, HMSO 1963.
47. See B. Showler, op.cit., p.83; and MSC op.cit., p.6ff.

48. See B. Showler, op.cit., pp.26-28.
49. See MSC, op.cit., p.4.
50. See B. Showler, op.cit., p.14.
51. See for example, Hansard vol. 838, (5 June 1972), Col.50ff. and Trades Union Congress, Annual Report and Congress Proceedings 1972, para.87.
52. See Hansard Vol.838 (5 June 1972), Col.57.
53. See J. Lawrence, The Manpower Services Commission - Expectation and Realisation, Institute for Manpower Studies, 1973.
54. Santosh Mukherjee not only played an important role in the debate over the establishment of the MSC, but also, as will be seen, he provided the original rationale for the Commission becoming involved in the provision of special measures for the relief of unemployment. Having worked for 5 years in the TUC Economics Department as Len Murray's deputy and also spent short spells at both the Department of Labour and the Treasury, he in a sense represented the close liaison which existed between the TUC and the Government(both Conservative and Labour) in the origins and early development of the MSC. Tragically, he died of a heart attack in 1979. An appreciation of his influence as 'the guru of British Labour Markets' is provided in Fifty Years of Political and Economic Planning: Looking Forward 1931-1981, Ed. John Pinder, Heinemann, London.
55. See Douglas Webber, Social Democracy as the Midwife of Change, University of Essex, p.3.
56. The debate surrounding the modern usage of the term is subjected to a clear and concise analysis by Leo Panitch in an article entitled 'Recent theorisations of corporatism: reflections on a growth industry', British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 31, June 1980.
57. Accounts of the origins of the concept of corporatism, and the links between its original and present day usage can be found in L. Panitch, op.cit.; Otto Newman, The Challenge of Corporatism, The Macmillan Press Ltd. 1981; and P. Schmitter 'Still the Century of Corporatism?', Review of Politics, Vol.36, 1974, pp.85-131.
58. According to Otto Newman, "The essence of corporatism is its tripartite structure". See Otto Newman, op.cit., p.75.
59. See L. Panitch, op.cit.
60. See, for example, O. Newman, op.cit., p.37; or Keith Middlemas, Politics in Industrial Society, Andre Deutsch, London 1979.

61. See Valentine A. Bell, Junior Instruction Centres and Their Future, A Report to the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, Edinburgh, 1934, p.4.
62. See Trevor Smith, The Politics of the Corporate Economy, Martin Robertson, Oxford, 1979, pp. 100-103.
63. See, ibid., p.104.
64. See, L. Panitch, Social Democracy and Industrial Militancy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1976, p.20ff.
65. See, Trevor Smith, op.cit., pp.109-110.
66. See ibid., p.107.
67. Colin Crouch takes the 1956 White Paper as the starting point for his account of the development of corporatism in modern industrial relations. See Colin Crouch, Class Conflict and the Industrial Relations Crisis, Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1977, p.xiv.
68. See ibid., p.214.
69. See B. Showler, op.cit., p.86.
70. See. C. Crouch, op.cit., p.213.
71. See, T. Smith, op.cit., pp.147 and 153.
72. The Civil Service, Vol. 1., Report of the Committee 1966-68, Cmnd. 3638, London, HMSO, 1968, p.105.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid., p.50.
75. See ibid., p.51 and pp.138-140.
76. Santosh Mukherjee refers to the Fulton Report's admiration of the Swedish system of administration in the course of his argument for the adoption of an institution similar to the Swedish Labour Market Board in the U.K. See S. Mukherjee, Making Labour Markets Work.
77. See The Civil Service, pp.61-62.
78. See C. Crouch, op.cit., pp.196-197.
79. See ibid., pp.82-83 and pp.215-216; and L. Panitch, op.cit., pp.63-76.

80. See MSC, Annual Report 1974-75, p.6.
81. See T. Smith, op.cit., p.153.
82. See C. Crouch, op.cit., p.83.
83. See ibid., p.217.
84. See T. Smith, op.cit., p.153.
85. See C. Crouch, op.cit., p.231.
86. See ibid., p.232-233.
87. See The Conservative Manifesto 1970 in British Election Manifestos 1900-1974, ed. F.W.S. Craig, The Macmillan Press Ltd., London and Basingstoke, 1975, p.330.
88. See D.J. Howells, op.cit., p.306.
89. See The Conservative Manifesto 1970, op.cit., p.328.
90. See Andrew Glyn and John Harrison, The British Economic Disaster, Pluto Press, London, 1980, p.59.
91. Exactly how statist or how corporatist the 1971 Industrial Relations Act should be considered is a complex question, which goes beyond the reference of this account. For some discussion of this question see C. Crouch, op.cit., pp.160-178.
92. See L. Panitch, op.cit., pp.221-222.
93. See ibid., pp.222-225; and A. Glyn and J. Harrison op.cit., pp.61-65.
94. See C. Crouch, op.cit., p.242; A. Glyn and J. Harrison op.cit., pp.70-73; and L. Panitch, op.cit., p.225.
95. See D.J.Howells, op.cit., p.307.
96. See MSC, Annual Report 1974-75, pp.1-2.
97. See D.J. Howells, op.cit., p.310.
98. See ibid., pp.310-311.
99. See ibid., pp.311-312;and MSC, op.cit., pp.16-18.
100. A number of submissions were made to the D E along these lines by organisations such as The Manpower Society and the Institute of Manpower Studies. See John Lawrence, op.cit.

101. M S C , op.cit., p.29.
102. See M S C., op.cit.
103. M S C., Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy, p.6, para 1.1.
104. Ibid., para.1.6.
105. Ibid., p.7, para.1.12.
106. See ibid., pp.6-7, para.1.8.

CHAPTER 2UNEMPLOYMENT AND GOVERNMENT POLICY:A HISTORY OF SPECIAL MEASURES

In the account that follows I intend to focus upon various past examples of job creation, training and instruction schemes which have been implemented in response to unemployment. Where it is applicable, I will emphasise those schemes which have been aimed specifically at the relief of youth unemployment. My object is not to attempt a comprehensive history of government policy in relation to unemployment, but rather to present a selective history which concentrates on certain specific kinds of measures. However, other measures, such as those which are primarily concerned with the provision of maintenance for the unemployed, must also be referred to. Schemes for the provision of work (and equally those providing training and instruction) have often been integrally connected with schemes for the provision of maintenance; consequently, it is sometimes necessary to consider both together as aspects of the same general policy towards the relief of unemployment. Furthermore, it is important that some attempt should be made to understand both the specific measures and the more general policies directed at unemployment in the wider context of government economic policies as a whole. These in their turn need to be explained in the context of the dominant economic theories in terms of which they were formulated. Thus, although this chapter is intended primarily to give an account of the history of certain specific kinds of approach to the relief of unemployment which can be thought of as precedents for the special measures approach recently adopted by the MSC, it necessarily tends at times towards being a more general history of government policy in response to unemployment, and at certain key points it needs grounding in the broader histories of economic policy and economic theory.

Before the 1880s 'unemployment' did not appear as a concept in political economy, and was not regarded as a responsibility of Government policy.⁽¹⁾ Within the dominant 19th century classical

school of political economy, the view was held that a full employment equilibrium was part of the 'natural order' of the economic system. This was simply deduced from Say's Law which states that 'supply creates its own demand', and was upheld regardless of any empirical inconsistencies that might appear. There might be periodic crises in the process of adjustment around the equilibrium, but within the assumptions of classical economy 'general over-production was an impossibility'.(2)

This understanding, or rather neglect, of the problem of unemployment was given expression in the 19th century social policy, and in particular in the New Poor Law of 1834. The implication of the doctrine that a full employment equilibrium was the natural order of the labour market was that anyone who sought work ought to be able to find it, and anyone who was out of work must either be unable or unwilling to work. These views were institutionally embodied in the 1834 Poor Law which, with its harsh regulations based on the principles of 'deterrence' and 'less eligibility', sought to drive the able-bodied back into the labour market and to make them self-reliant at any cost rather than face the humiliations of the workhouse or the labour test.(3)

Yet, while the philosophy of the 1834 Act was dominant, its hold was never absolute, and compromises were in fact often necessary to sustain the system that it sanctioned. Thus pragmatic and humanitarian adjustments in the administration of the Poor Law were sometimes made in response to particular individual or localised circumstances, and outside the Poor Law system, there were alternative sources of relief. Notably the charities, while for the most part being enthusiastic supporters of the Poor Law philosophy, were prepared to compromise the logic of this philosophy by giving relief to those they adjudged to be unfortunate, but deserving, cases. Likewise, in particularly grave crises, the Government was prepared to make practical exceptions to its own philosophy, as for example, in the cases of the relief works authorised in Ireland in the 1840s and in Lancashire between 1863 and 1866. Also, there were various thrift institutions,

often associated with trade unions, which operated insurance schemes designed to maintain the self-reliance of workers through occasional periods of unemployment.⁽⁴⁾

Although in one sense these were exceptions to the philosophy and system of the 1834 Poor Law, in another sense, it is arguable that such exceptions, by preventing the philosophy being taken to its logical conclusion, sustained the system as a practical policy. Thus, from a broader perspective, the apparent compromises to the system might be considered an integral element of the system, the system not being exclusively defined by the regulations of the Poor Law, but rather being what Jose Harris has described as "the uneasy synthesis of Poor Law, thrift, and charity".⁽⁵⁾

The inadequacy of this 'uneasy synthesis' was exposed by its failure to cope with the prolonged mass unemployment of the 'Great Depression' of the 1880s. The serious riots and demonstrations that ensued helped to put unemployment on the political agenda for the first time.⁽⁶⁾ The period that followed, from 1886 onwards, can be understood as a period of experimentation, during which various policies were tested, either at the local level or amongst the charities, before the need for a national policy was accepted, and the form that it should take was determined jointly by the Labour Exchanges Act of 1909 and the National Insurance Act of 1911.

One of the significant, yet ultimately unsuccessful, lines of experimentation during this 25 year period was that concerned with the artificial creation of work as a means of relieving unemployment. Under the punitive regulations of the Poor Law, the performance of a 'labour test' was made a condition of the receipt of outdoor relief by the able-bodied. The labour test consisted of gruelling work, such as stone breaking or oakum picking, which was selected both for its deterrent effect and because it offered little competition to other labour.⁽⁷⁾

The prolonged severity of the Great Depression exhausted the resources of self-help and charity that had generally in the past kept skilled workers clear of the Poor Law system. In this situation, the Government of the day became concerned that the labour test, rather than acting as a deterrent, was destroying the proficiency of skilled men and prejudicing their return to employment within their previous trade. The response of Joseph Chamberlain the President of the Local Government Board, when prompted by riots of the London unemployed in February 1886, was to issue a circular to local authorities, urging them "to co-operate with Poor Law guardians in providing temporary non-pauperising employment for the deserving unemployed." (8)

The so-called 'Chamberlain circular' was to be issued five times between 1886 and 1893, and in the years following, as the Poor Laws became increasingly irrelevant to the relief of unemployment and the labour test fell into disuse, various local authorities and charities experimented with further schemes of relief work and with the establishment of labour colonies. (9) The culmination of this process of development was the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, which attempted to transform the practise of the previously localised experiments into a more ambitious national programme administered by Distress Committees in all major centres of population. (10)

However, it is generally considered that the 1905 Act's main achievement was to give final proof of the impracticality of remedies, such as relief works and labour colonies, that were "external to the normal commercial and industrial system". (11) In the case of relief works this only confirmed the experience of the previous twenty years. Those authorised by the Chamberlain circular had been almost a complete failure in practical terms, and the subsequent experiments of local authorities and charities for the most part fared little better. (12) One of the main problems was that, although the Government was prepared under certain circumstances to encourage local initiatives, it gave little

practical support and was not prepared to finance a national policy. Thus, the financial burden of these schemes fell largely on the local authorities, and it was generally those with the most serious unemployment problems who were least able to bear such costs.⁽¹³⁾ But, beyond these external financial difficulties, there were inherent problems involved with the provision of relief work as some form of intermediary between normal employment and the punitive labour test of the Poor Law. As with the work that was required by the labour test, relief work was not supposed to compete with or replace work that would be carried out otherwise. Yet, as a result, the work that was created artificially was expensive, inefficient, and often just as 'demoralising' as that which was carried out under the labour test.⁽¹⁴⁾ For example, the types of work suggested by the Chamberlain circular included shovelling on sewage farms, paving streets and laying out cemeteries.⁽¹⁵⁾ Another seemingly intractable problem was presented by the question of what was the proper level of remuneration for those employed on relief schemes. Those administering the schemes were anxious to maintain some financial differential as an incentive to those seeking normal employment, as well as being concerned to minimise their running costs. However, the trade unions were worried that the schemes would act to undermine wage levels if those employed on them were paid anything less than the standard rate.⁽¹⁶⁾

The failure of relief works encouraged the development of rural labour colonies as an alternative means of taking the urban unemployed off the labour market. Such colonies were established both by private charitable organisations, such as the Salvation Army, and by local poor law guardians. The motives behind their establishment were various. For some they were primarily institutions of penal segregation, for others they were an idealistic 'back to the land' experiment in communal living. Often they were regarded as a training stage in preparation for eventual emigration. As one of the alternative policies authorised by the Unemployed Workmen Act, it seemed likely at one time that they would have an important role to play in any new national policy. However, for the most part, these experiments turned out to be just

as inefficient, expensive and demoralising as relief works, and thus likewise were eventually discredited. (17)

Despite their lack of practical success, the various forms of relief works and labour colonies tried out during this twenty-year period have been seen as representing an important breach in the laissez-faire philosophy that was embodied in the 1834 Poor Law: a move away from deterrence and less eligibility, and towards the recognition of the right to work or maintenance. However, this view can be questioned. The purpose of the Chamberlain circular's endorsement of public works was never to supersede the Poor Law, but rather to reinforce it, by separating out the deserving unemployed so that the severe regulations could be enforced all the more strictly upon those considered undeserving. (18) Likewise, the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 can be seen as merely a means of improving the administration of traditional forms of charitable relief. (19) Thus, what might be said to have happened over this twenty year period was that various attempts were made to reinforce, rather than replace, the 'uneasy synthesis' that had already been proved inadequate during the Great Depression of the 1880s. These measures did not, by and large, depart from the fundamental principles that had supported the previous synthesis, and they were not, by and large, any more successful.

In the early years of the twentieth century the need for a national policy to cope with unemployment was thus more pressing than ever. (20) The failure of alternatives or supplements to the Poor Law brought the focus of reform back onto the Poor Law itself, the administration of which was in a state of mounting crisis at this time. (21) Although not originally intended to be a temporary measure, the Unemployed Workmen Act was eventually given only a three year life-span pending the results of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws that was set up in 1905. (22) When the Majority and Minority Reports were published in 1909, despite their many differences, both recommended the dismantling

of the Poor Law administrative structure.⁽²³⁾ However, daunted by the immense financial and technical complications involved in such a reform, the Liberal Government had in the meantime decided to bypass the Poor Law altogether in its attempt to produce a new national policy to deal with unemployment.⁽²⁴⁾

The main elements of this policy, as mentioned before, were the provision of a national system of labour exchanges and a national insurance scheme. Yet, there was to have been a third element, the establishment of a national Development Commission for the financing and administration of counter-cyclical public works; but, despite receiving legislative approval, this never got off the ground as a practical policy.⁽²⁵⁾ Labour exchanges and national insurance, although significant reforms, also had their limitations as practical policies. The labour exchanges, as has been pointed out already in the context of the history of manpower policy, were rendered largely ineffective in their primary function of organising the labour market as soon as they were given the additional responsibility of administering the new insurance scheme. The insurance scheme, although described as national, covered less than a quarter of the total male labour force, being concentrated mainly on skilled men and excluding women virtually altogether. It was also extremely cautious and conservative in the scale and duration of the benefits that it promised to contributors. Thus, in general, it was a narrow and tentative experiment rather than a full-scale national programme of insurance.⁽²⁶⁾

Leading Liberal politicians, such as Churchill and Lloyd George, introduced these reforms as a scientific policy to deal with unemployment and spoke of them as heralding a more comprehensive programme of social reform.⁽²⁷⁾ However, this never came about; and as they stood, the measures can only be described as limited and pragmatic adjustments to the existing scheme of social policy, rather than the embodiment of a radical new philosophy.⁽²⁸⁾

The main architect of the Liberal reforms of this period was in fact William Beveridge. A brief examination of his thought at the time can help to place the new policies within the broader context of economic theory. In Unemployment: A Problem of Industry, published in 1908, Beveridge acknowledged that unemployment was not necessarily the fault of individuals unemployed. However, he still held to the basic proposition of Say's Law and believed that, while there might be a pattern of cyclical fluctuation around the point of equilibrium, general overproduction was an impossibility. His main explanation for unemployment, if it was not voluntary, was that it was 'frictional', being the result of imperfections in the functioning of the labour market which were particularly associated with the widespread system of casual labour. The solution, he thought, was to improve the organisation of the labour market; and the government policy that this required was the provision of a national network of labour exchanges. The basic philosophy, then, was one of limited state intervention to ensure the smoother operation of the labour market mechanism, the essentially efficient and benevolent nature of which remained guaranteed by the fundamental premises of classical political economy. (29)

Similarly, the national insurance scheme, of which Beveridge was also an advocate, can be understood as an 'organisationist' development of a predominantly nineteenth century approach to social policy and the relief of unemployment. Thus, the provision of insurance was a means of intervening to extend and organise more efficiently the workers' own resources of thrift and self-help, and thereby, to ensure that they should remain self-sufficient through any brief periods of unemployment they might face. It was by no means an acknowledgement of the state's responsibility to support the unemployed. The scheme was to be run on a strict actuarial basis, with the contributors' right to benefit being limited to 15 weeks per year. (30) This was consistent with the view explained above that non-voluntary unemployment was of a limited cyclical and frictional nature.

The assumption was, that with the complementary provision of labour exchanges, no-one genuinely seeking work should remain unemployed for more than the limited period of time for which they were covered by insurance benefits.

Thus, in effect, these 'organisationist' improvements of the mechanisms of the market and of individual self-help produced a new and more 'scientific' means of distinguishing the deserving from the undeserving. Those who were able-bodied, and still could not look after themselves after the reforms, could only have themselves to blame; and for them, the deterrent of the Poor Law and the workhouse was to remain as fierce as ever.⁽³¹⁾ There was virtually no understanding that unemployment might have other causes, located deeper within the essential mechanism of the labour market itself, and thus, no allowance was made for prolonged mass unemployment. That the inadequacy of the Liberals so-called scientific policy was not exposed before the outbreak of the First World War, was largely due to the favourable economic conditions that prevailed during this comparatively brief period, rather than to any inherent merits in the policy.⁽³²⁾ However, the interwar years were to be less kind.

It is difficult to make reliable comparisons between the rates of unemployment before and after the First World War because there were different sources for the statistics covering each of the two periods. However, it has been estimated that the average rate of unemployment for the twenty years between the two world wars was between two and three times higher than that for the thirty years preceding the First World War.⁽³³⁾ It is not surprising, then, that the tentative prewar measures devised to control and cope with unemployment were rapidly overwhelmed by the magnitude of the disaster that took place after the war. The prolonged mass unemployment of the interwar period, during which the cyclical pattern of variation was between unemployment rates of 10 and 20%, was an impossibility according to the conventional assumption of classical political economy that a full employment equilibrium was the norm. Yet, the social policy

that had been based on that assumption, and was designed to cope with the limited range of possibilities that it encompassed, was faced with such an impossible situation as a pressing and unavoidable social reality.

The very fact that unemployment reached the levels already mentioned demonstrates the ineffectiveness of the prewar measures taken to control unemployment through the organisation of the labour market.⁽³⁴⁾ The higher the level of unemployment rose, the less relevant became the placement work of the exchanges and the more over-burdened they became with insurance administration.⁽³⁵⁾ The other side of this inability to control unemployment was the inadequacy of the means of relief provided for the millions who were unemployed as a result. The two major instruments of relief that were the legacy of the prewar era, the experimental unemployment insurance scheme and the antiquated Poor Law system, were both reduced to states of crisis and disintegration by the end of the 1920s.⁽³⁶⁾ Financial and administrative order was then only restored at the beginning of the 1930s through harsh cuts in the levels of benefits and the use of the hated means test, at the expense of rioting and hunger amongst the unemployed.⁽³⁷⁾ Although the situation gradually improved in the latter half of the thirties, it was only the rearmament in preparation for the Second World War, and the war itself, that 'solved' the problem.⁽³⁸⁾

Given that the policies that had found favour in the Edwardian era proved so inadequate at dealing with the mass unemployment of the interwar period, it needs to be asked to what extent attempts were made to revive some of the policies that had been rejected before the First World War, and to what extent the attempt was made to devise new policies. The answer, in brief, must be that although a variety of alternative policies were tried none was ever of more than a marginal significance. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile taking a look at some of these alternatives, in particular those that were applied specifically to the problem of youth unemployment.

One of the main demands of the labour movement and the organised unemployed during the 1920s was for government work schemes to be provided for the unemployed at trade union rates of pay. (39) However, the demand met with little response, even from the Labour Government, and in general it can be said that little attention was given to the policy of public works during the interwar period. (40) The prejudice against such schemes persisted from the prewar era, and the predominant view was that any money spent by government on the creation of jobs in public works would be at the direct expense of capital available for the creation of jobs in the private sector of the economy. (41) Consequently, the amount spent on public works was insignificant. (42)

The body most concerned with the organisation and funding of relief work schemes was the Unemployment Grants Committee. This was established in 1920 in order to make grants available to local authorities providing approved schemes in areas of high unemployment. The work provided was, for the most part, of the conventional type for such schemes - sewage disposal, road building, laying out and maintaining parks, etc. The amount given out by the Committee varied from year to year depending on the policy of the government. (43) In the peak year of 1931, £30 million was spent on direct relief work, and the largest number of men employed at any one time was 59,000. (44) However, in 1932, the Committee was abruptly wound up, falling a victim to the National Government's policy of savage public spending cuts.

The introduction of Government Training Centres for the unemployed in 1925 has already been referred to in the account that was given above of the development of manpower policy. (45) These were also on a very limited scale compared to the immensity of the problem. Indeed, the policy was to restrict their intake in accordance with future employment prospects, so that those who were trained would be almost certain of finding employment at the end of their six-month course. (46) As a result, placement rates were exceptionally high, but it was only when the peak of unemployment had passed that the numbers being admitted to the Training Centres rose to a significant level. (47)

An alternative to Training Centres was provided by Instructional Centres, which were less specifically vocational, and aimed more generally "at restoring unemployed men to a condition fitting them to obtain and hold employment if and when it becomes available".⁽⁴⁸⁾ When they were first set up in 1929, attendance on their twelve week 'reconditioning courses' was purely voluntary. However, within a year, insurance officers were given the power to compel attendance as a condition for the receipt of unemployment benefit.⁽⁴⁹⁾ At their peak, Instructional Centres registered over 20,000 admissions in a year, but again this came after the worst peak of unemployment at the beginning of the thirties.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Other special measures directed at unemployed men included: training in basic agricultural techniques on farm camps in preparation for emigration to the colonies; an industrial transference scheme to relocate unemployed labour out of the depressed areas; the provision of physical training centres and the establishment of occupational and recreational centres under the aegis of the National Council of Social Services. In addition, special provision was made for what were considered to be the special needs of unemployed women and girls by the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment: this consisted largely of preparation for domestic service.⁽⁵¹⁾

Before describing the provision that was made for the young unemployed, it is necessary to say something about the specific nature and dynamics of youth unemployment during the twenties and thirties. The official literature at this time used the term 'juvenile' rather than 'youth', and applied it to the age group between 14 and 18.⁽⁵²⁾ Until 1934 the information about the employment and unemployment of a substantial portion of this age group was very incomplete. The minimum school-leaving age was set at the fourteenth birthday, but it was not until the age of 16 that juveniles entered into the national Unemployment Insurance scheme. Thus, between 14 and 16, there was a gap in the readily available sources of statistical information. Consequently, the only reliable figures for juvenile unemployment rates during this period apply just to the 16 to 18 age group, though it is

generally assumed that the rates amongst the younger age group were broadly comparable.⁽⁵³⁾

The first thing that needs to be pointed out is that, in direct contrast to the modern situation, the rate of unemployment for juveniles during the mass unemployment of the interwar years was considerably less than that for the population as a whole. Thus in 1925, for example, only 4.1% of insured juveniles were unemployed, as compared to 11.6% of insured adults:⁽⁵⁴⁾ and in the peak year of 1932, the ratio was even more favourable to youth, the figures being 7.6% for juveniles and 23.3% for adults.⁽⁵⁵⁾

The explanation of this situation lay in the particular and exclusive nature of the juvenile labour market at this time. A whole range of unskilled jobs existed - such as messengers, van boys, office boys, machine-minders, etc - for which juveniles were exclusively hired, during which no form of training was given, and at the end of which dismissal was inevitable as soon as the young person reached an age when they could command an adult wage. A large proportion of the apparently buoyant juvenile labour market consisted of these 'dead-end' jobs.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Their effect was, temporarily, to insulate juveniles from the full impact of mass unemployment, but in the long run, to exacerbate the situation of young adults over the age of eighteen.⁽⁵⁷⁾

This was not a new problem. The role of such 'blind-alley occupations' in the creation of future generations of casual labour and adult unemployment had been clearly recognised at the time of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws.⁽⁵⁸⁾ However, no serious attempt was made to remedy the problem then,⁽⁵⁹⁾ and nor was it during the interwar years. The view expressed by the Malcolm Committee on Education and Industry in 1926 was that there were only a limited number of skilled jobs available in the adult labour market, and therefore, there was little point in intervening to increase the number of apprenticeships and training opportunities available for juveniles.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Thus, rather than attempting to find a remedy for the long-term structural problem of juvenile employment in dead-end jobs, government efforts were concentrated on providing what were admitted to be only palliatives for the apparently less serious problem of juvenile unemployment.⁽⁶¹⁾ Despite the comparatively low percentage involved, juvenile unemployment was considered to be a serious problem at the time. The 14 to 18 age group was associated with adolescence and perceived as a particularly difficult and dangerous period of life, during which an unemployed young person could easily become 'demoralised' and thereby rendered permanently unemployable. In the words of the Malcolm Committee:

"The disintegrating effect, moral and physical, of juvenile unemployment is incalculable...In such districts, where employment is a comparative luxury, to allow boys and girls of 14 to 18 to roam the streets should be unthinkable. That the unemployed boy of today is the unemployable man of tomorrow is a saying we are satisfied is often only too true".⁽⁶²⁾

The main means used to keep the unemployed boys and girls off the streets were the Juvenile Unemployment Centres, subsequently renamed the Junior Instruction Centres. These were first set-up in connection with the Out-of-Work Donation Scheme which was introduced as an emergency measure immediately after the end of the First World War.⁽⁶³⁾ Unemployed juveniles between the ages of 15 and 18 had to attend approved courses at Juvenile Employment Centres as a condition for the receipt of the donation. When the Out-of-Work Donation Scheme came to an end, the centres were briefly closed, but they were then reopened under the 1920 Unemployment Insurance Act which made attendance a condition for juveniles receiving benefit. Between 1918 and 1934 there were mounted seven different schemes involving Juvenile Unemployment Centres and, from 1929 onwards, Junior Instruction Centres; and over the period, more than a million young people passed through the centres and their associated classes. Each scheme was set up on a temporary basis, but then had to be replaced by a similar scheme as the problem of juvenile unemployment persisted. The facilities were provided by the local

education authorities supported by varying percentages of government aid. (64)

The basic aim of all the schemes was to maintain the employability of the young people concerned. (65) The centres attempted to create the atmosphere of a 'club' rather than a school, but discipline was still considered to be an essential feature, (66) and at some centres a prefect system was introduced. (67) The main emphasis of the curriculum was placed on physical fitness and practical activities, with an industrial bias for boys and a domestic bias for girls. Although it was attempted to relate the activities to the requirements of the local labour market, there was no training of a specifically vocational nature provided. In addition to the physical and practical activities, efforts were made to improve the general education of the young people, to broaden their interests, and to develop their social awareness. (68)

Reviewing the work being done by the Juvenile Unemployment Centres in 1926, the Malcolm Report concluded that they were performing a valuable role in preventing the deterioration of unemployed young people, and recommended that a permanent scheme should be brought into operation. (69) The main problem identified with existing arrangements was that only half the age group could be compelled to attend the centres. What has already been referred to as a gap in sources of information, between the minimum school-leaving age of 14 and the minimum age of entry to the Unemployment Insurance scheme of 16, was also a gap in state supervision. Unemployed juveniles between the ages of 16 and 18 could be forced to attend the centres as a condition for the receipt of benefit, but the younger age group were difficult to maintain contact with and could only be urged to attend on a voluntary basis. (70) This was perceived as a particularly unfortunate situation by the members of the Malcolm Committee who considered these earlier years as the most dangerous and impressionable. (71) Consequently, the Report gave considerable attention to a review of methods suggested for bridging the gap. (72)

Following the Malcolm Report, two National Advisory Councils for Juvenile Employment (one for England and Wales, and one for Scotland) were set up and given the task of considering a permanent scheme of Juvenile Unemployment Centres.⁽⁷³⁾ As has been referred to before,⁽⁷⁴⁾ their composition was of a typically corporatist format, representatives of both employers and unions being included, as well as representatives of Local Education Authorities, teachers, Advisory Councils and the Ministry of Labour. Their first reports reasserted the objectives of the centres and recommended their continuation in the following terms:

"provision should continue to be made for dealing with unemployment among boys and girls by the establishment of Centres or Classes, under the administration of the Education Authority of the area concerned, with the object of preventing deterioration, and of facilitating the reabsorption of the boys and girls into industry by maintaining or re-establishing, through further education or training, habits of discipline and self-respect".⁽⁷⁵⁾

Subsequently, a more permanent scheme was established under the 1930 Unemployment Insurance Act, but it was not until the 1934 Unemployment Act that the problem of the gap was finally tackled. This latter piece of legislation brought the 14 to 16 age group into the Unemployment Insurance scheme, and, although they would still not be eligible for benefit until 16, the power was created to compel their attendance at suitable courses should they become unemployed. At the same time, the provision of suitable facilities was made a statutory duty of the Local Education Authorities.⁽⁷⁶⁾

Following the 1934 Act, there was a substantial increase in the numbers attending Junior Instruction Centres, though not perhaps as great as might have been expected, since by this time the employment situation was beginning to improve. Aggregate attendances for a year reached their highest level in 1936, when they were just over 190,000, compared with a figure

of 110,000 in 1933. Thereafter the numbers declined steadily, and with the outbreak of the Second World War, the centres rapidly disappeared. (77)

Other special provisions for the juvenile unemployed included a juvenile transference scheme and a camp to prepare juveniles for emigration. Also a large proportion of girls were taken by the Domestic Training Centres for Women which were run by the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment. (78)

What can be said about all these special measures, whether aimed at the juvenile or the adult unemployed, was that they were essentially palliatives, not attempting to tackle the causes of unemployment, but instead seeking to mitigate some of the worst effects. The various marginal schemes of training, instruction and job creation thus played much the same role as the local and charitable schemes of the nineteenth century. Then, the inhumane system of the Poor Law had had to be compromised and supplemented in order to survive in the face of a social reality that was inconsistent with the abstract economic theory in terms of which it had originally been formulated. In the interwar period, the organisationist policy that had been formulated at the beginning of the twentieth century as a scientific alternative to the Poor Law, but which shared the same basic economic premises, had likewise to be compromised and supplemented in the face of a theoretically impossible social reality. Each time, the various special schemes were theoretically breaches in the philosophy of the main system of policies, but in reality they functioned as the saving grace of that system.

Despite the massive denial of Say's Law that was constituted by the reality of unemployment in the interwar years, throughout this period government policy continued to be framed within the macro-economic assumptions of classical economy. However, the disjunction between theory and reality did provide the stimulus for a major revision at the level of economic theory which was to have important policy implications after the Second World War. This revision was, of course, that which is associated with John Maynard Keynes and his major work, The General Theory of Employment,

Interest and Money. (79)

Keynes accepted the existence of frictional and voluntary unemployment, the two main forms of unemployment recognised by classical economics, but argued that there was also a third category, which he defined as 'involuntary' unemployment. The explanation of this third category of unemployment involved a major challenge to the assumption of Say's Law that supply always tends to create its own demand. Involuntary unemployment, Keynes argued, was the result of a prolonged deficiency in aggregate demand. The explanation of how this was possible, as expounded by the 'General Theory', was both complex and technical. However, essentially, it depended upon understanding the determination of the level of employment in the wider context of the maintenance of equilibrium between other key economic variables. Thus, Keynes argued that there was no reason why the point of equilibrium reached (between consumption, investment, saving and national income) should coincide with the overall level of demand necessary to secure full employment. This being the case, the level of employment could no longer be regarded, as it was in classical economics, simply as a function of the level of wages acting as the price mechanism regulating supply and demand within the labour market.

This revolution at the level of economic theory had important implications in terms of contemporary economic policies. Classical economics explained persistent unemployment in terms of the insufficient downward flexibility of the level of wages. In accordance with this theory, the main policy objective of interwar governments in trying to reduce the level of unemployment was the forcing down of wage rates. Keynesian theory, however, indicated that such a policy was not only doomed to be ineffective, but likely to be counterproductive. Thus, in the absence of any other action being taken to ensure a sufficient overall level of demand within the economy, the main impact of any reduction of real wage levels was likely to be upon the level of consumption,

leading to further falls in the levels of demand and employment.

Keynes' alternative was to recommend positive state intervention directed at what he regarded to be the source of the problem, the regulation and maintenance of the level of effective demand. This could take a number of different forms. Either investment could be stimulated by a reduction of interest rates, or consumption could be encouraged by taxation policy. However, both these measures were indirect and still relied on manipulating the decisions of private individuals. Keynes did not think that such manipulation would always be sufficient to pull the economy out of a slump. Hence, the policy that he most strongly recommended to restore and maintain full employment was one of large-scale direct government investment in public works. This, he argued, must if necessary be financed out of a budget deficit.

Keynes had been pressing for such policies since the early twenties, though without being able to justify them at the level of macro-economic theory. His 'General Theory', published in 1936, was intended to provide such a theoretical justification, so that an extensive policy of public works could be incorporated as an important and integral element of government macro-economic policy rather than remaining as one of the small-scale exceptional measures that were tolerated only as tokens of humanitarian concern.

Keynes' ideas had little impact on government policy before the outbreak of the Second World War. The treasury orthodoxies of sound money and a balanced budget precluded the kinds of intervention that he was recommending. The reaction to the depression and steeply rising unemployment of the early thirties was, as we have seen, to cut back on public spending, including relief works and unemployment benefits, in a vain attempt to balance the budget in the face of shrinking revenues and escalating relief expenditures.⁽⁸⁰⁾ It was only the over-riding national interest of the war that made possible reversal of this policy and the adoption

of what was in effect an inadvertent Keynesian policy of unbalanced budgets, heavy public investment and low interest rates.⁽⁸¹⁾ At the same time unemployment ceased to be a problem.

The experience of the Second World War seemed to provide a decisive confirmation of the role that state expenditure could play in the maintenance of full employment, and thereby prepared the way for the translation of Keynes' doctrine into a consciously adopted peace-time policy.⁽⁸²⁾ The official adoption of a Keynesian policy of demand management in the 1944 White Paper on Employment Policy, and its subsequent apparent success in controlling unemployment during the postwar era, have already been described in the context of the history of the development of active manpower policy. Perhaps at this stage certain qualifications should be made with regard to this description. First, it can be questioned exactly how fully the White Paper endorsed Keynesian policies, and whether in fact the full conversion to Keynesianism was ever achieved.⁽⁸³⁾ Certainly Beveridge, who by this time had been fully converted to Keynesianism, thought that the White Paper was still trying to cling onto conservative orthodoxies and that therefore it did not provide the basis for an adequate full employment policy.⁽⁸⁴⁾ Secondly, it can be questioned to what extent the high level of employment achieved in the postwar era was the direct result of the government policies adopted.⁽⁸⁵⁾ But, whatever the case may be with regard to these questions, it is certain that postwar governments did accept a greater degree of responsibility for maintaining the level of activity in the economy than had ever been contemplated in the prewar era,⁽⁸⁶⁾ and that for roughly two decades they appeared to be able to guarantee a situation that was in practice very close to the goal of full employment.

In this situation, particular micro-economic policies to deal with unemployment, at first, seemed largely unnecessary; and then, when they were required, they took on, or at least were presented in, a new form. This new form, as has already been explained,

was that of active manpower policy. However, looking back in historical terms, it can now be understood that active manpower policy was in many ways similar to the organisationist policies espoused by Beveridge and implemented by the Liberals at the beginning of the century.⁽⁸⁷⁾ The continuity between the two sets of policies is indicated by the importance that each of them ascribed to the placement role of labour exchanges. Both sets of policies assumed a certain form of full employment equilibrium as the norm and were concerned to remove frictional factors in the labour market which were perceived as interfering with the achievement of this norm, or as making its achievement give rise to undesirable side effects. But there was an important difference, and this lay in the macro-economic context assumed by each of the two policies. Beveridge's organisational policy was set within the assumptions of classical economy, according to which the norm of a full employment equilibrium was guaranteed by the unfettered operation of a free labour market. In contrast, active manpower policy was set within the macro-economic assumptions of Keynesianism, according to which the labour market's regulation of a full employment equilibrium was to be guaranteed by a government policy of demand management.

Before embarking upon an analysis of the way in which special measures to deal with unemployment emerged from the newly-created Manpower Services Commission, it may be helpful to give a schematic summary of the historical account that has just been presented. First, at the level of economic theory, the account can be divided fairly straightforwardly into two parts. From the beginning of the nineteenth century until the outbreak of the Second World War, the dominant economic theory underlying all government policies in relation to employment and unemployment was classical political economy. According to this theory, a full employment equilibrium was guaranteed by the unhindered operation of the market mechanism. From the Second World War at least until the period of the setting up of the MSC in the early seventies,

Keynesian economics apparently enjoyed a similar position of dominance. According to Keynes, a full employment equilibrium could only be guaranteed by various forms of state intervention to ensure the steady growth of aggregate demand.

At the level of policies, the process of periodisation is far more complicated. Nevertheless, at the cost of considerable simplification, it is possible to mark out six distinct periods. The first four of these fall within the theoretical domain of classical economics; the latter two are subsequent to the Keynesian revolution.

The limits of the first period can conveniently be defined by the passing of the New Poor Law in 1834, and the onset of the Great Depression in the mid-1880s. During this period unemployment was not recognised as a concern of policy-making. The Poor Law sought to drive the able-bodied back into the labour market, where, in accordance with the doctrines of classical economy, everybody ought to be able to find work. In general, the only provision of work was as a deterrent in the form of the labour test. Yet there were exceptions to this harsh regime, involving the provision of both work and maintenance. These ran contrary to the strict logic of classical economic theory, but still had a positive role to play in the wider policy system - the role of palliatives. Thus, the strict official policy of the Poor Law, and the exceptions that existed to it, combined together in what has been described as an 'uneasy synthesis'.

The second period opened with the first issue of the Chamberlain circular in 1886, and closed with the rapid demise of the 1905 Unemployment Workmen Act. The Great Depression exposed the inadequacy of the uneasy synthesis of the Poor Law and its exceptions, and raised unemployment as a policy issue for the first time. The period that followed was one of experimentation, during which various attempts were made to develop the exceptions within the synthesis into a positive alternative policy.

In particular, various schemes were set up for the artificial provision of work which was neither part of the normal commercial and industrial system, nor directly part of the Poor Law's system of deterrence. However, all that was established was that such schemes were impractical. None developed beyond the status of the exceptional or the experimental. In the last analysis, they functioned either as deterrents or as palliatives, reinforcing, not replacing, the previous synthesis.

The third period can be defined, at its outer limits, by the setting up of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws in 1905 and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. This was the period of the emergence of an 'organisationist' national policy to deal with unemployment. It was essentially a policy of micro-economic adjustment, working from within the macro-economic assumptions of classical economy. The two main provisions made were a national system of labour exchanges and a limited form of national insurance scheme. Their purpose was to organise more efficiently the 'natural' mechanisms of market competition and provident self-help, so as to exclude the need for special measures intervening between the open system of the market and the penal system of the Poor Law. An improved market system would no longer require the uneasy synthesis of deterrents and palliatives; deterrents alone would be sufficient. This was presented as a 'scientific policy'.

The fourth period is that of the interwar years. During this period, the reality of prolonged mass unemployment overwhelmed both the assumptions of classical economy, and the 'scientific policy' that had been constructed on their basis. There emerged a new synthesis of exceptional palliatives and Poor Law/Unemployment Assistance deterrents.

policy can be explained quite simply by pointing out that there was no problem of unemployment and therefore no need for palliatives. However, there is another way in which the relationship between Keynesian economic policy and special measures for the relief of unemployment can be viewed. Keynesianism can be understood as a development of what were previously special measures for the relief of unemployment into an economic policy for the maintenance of full employment. In this way, special measures are rendered no longer special; rather they appear as integral elements of macro and micro-economic policy.

Thus, instead of special measures for the creation of artificial jobs, 'normal' jobs are created through the macro-economic policy of demand management, if necessary by direct public expenditure. And instead of training being a special measure, it appears within the framework of active manpower policy as an aspect of the micro-economic fine-tuning of Keynesian demand management. Thus, within the framework of classical economy, special measures were 'special' because they ran counter to the logic of economic policies and could only be justified in social terms; conversely, within the framework of Keynesianism, special measures were non-existent because they had been fully integrated into the logic of economic policies and therefore could be justified in both economic and social terms.

As we have seen, the Manpower Services Commission was planned as a development of active manpower policy and therefore assumed in its philosophy a Keynesian macro-economic framework. Yet, from its very first meeting, the Commission has been directly associated with the development of special measures for the relief of unemployment. It is to the problematical question of how these special measures have been understood and justified in terms of the philosophy of the newly-created MSC that I now turn.

Footnotes

1. See Jose Harris, Unemployment and Politics: A Study of English Social Policy 1886-1914, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972, pp. 1-4; and Bentley Gilbert, British Social Policy 1914-1939, B.T. Batsford Ltd., London, 1970, p.51.
2. See B. Showler, 'Political Economy and Unemployment' in B. Showler and A. Sinfield (eds.), The Workless State, Martin Robertson, Oxford, 1981, pp.27-30. See also J. Harris, op.cit., p.1.
3. See J. Harris op.cit., p.2.
4. See ibid., pp.2-3 and 102-103.
5. Ibid., p.51.
6. See ibid., pp.51-52 and E.J. Evans (ed.), Social Policy 1830-1914, Routledge & Keegan Paul, London, 1978, pp.161-162.
7. See E.J. Evans, op.cit., pp.168-170.
8. J. Harris, op.cit., pp.75-76. See also E.J. Evans, op.cit., pp.162 and 168-170.
9. See J. Harris, op.cit., p.76, p.102ff, and pp.148-150
10. See E.J. Evans, op.cit., p.284.
11. See J. Harris, op.cit., p.209 and B. Gilbert, op.cit., pp.51-52.
12. See J. Harris, op.cit., pp.76 and 180.
13. See ibid., pp.78 and 176.
14. See ibid., pp.76-77, 90 and 180-182.
15. See E.J. Evans, op.cit., p.169.
16. See J. Harris, op.cit., pp.86-88.
17. See ibid., pp.115-144 and pp.187-199.
18. See ibid., p.76.
19. See ibid., p.208.
20. See ibid., p.211.

22. See ibid., p.208.
23. See E.J. Evans, op.cit., p.260.
24. See J. Harris, op.cit., p.264.
25. See ibid., pp.340-346 and 357-359.
26. See B. Gilbert, op.cit., p.53.
27. See J. Harris, op.cit., pp.346-7.
28. See ibid., pp.351-2 and 362-364.
29. See B. Showler, op.cit., pp.30-31 and J. Harris op.cit., p.364.
30. See B. Gilbert op.cit., pp.52-54.
31. The attitude of early 20th century reformers, such as Beveridge, to those considered idle and undeserving was if anything harsher than that of their 19th century predecessors. See J. Harris op.cit., pp.285 and 362.
32. See J. Harris, op.cit., p.362.
33. See William Beveridge, Full Employment in a Free Society, Allen and Unwin, London, 1953, pp.72-73.
34. Even before the outbreak of the First World War it was evident that labour exchanges had failed to make the significant impact on the labour market that had been anticipated. See J. Harris, op.cit., p.352.
35. See B. Showler, The Public Employment Service, pp.22-23.
36. See B. Gilbert op.cit., pp.51-97 and 203-235.
37. See ibid., pp.162-194 and Wal Hannington, Unemployed Struggles 1919-1936, Lawrence and Wishart Limited, London, 1977, pp.219-277.
38. See Michael Stewart, Keynes and After, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1972, p.176.
39. See W. Hannington, op.cit., pp. 41 and 124.
40. See B. Gilbert, op.cit., p.193.

41. See M. Stewart, op.cit., p.75.
42. See B. Gilbert, op.cit., p.193.
43. See 'The Final Report of the Unemployment Grants Committee', Ministry of Labour Gazette, 1933, p.241.
44. See B. Gilbert, op.cit., p.193.
45. See above, Chapter 1, p.19.
46. See 'Training For The Unemployed: Some Recent Developments', Ministry of Labour Gazette, 1933, p.318.
47. See Ministry of Labour Gazette during the 1930s. Placement rates were generally in excess of 90%.
48. Ministry of Labour Gazette, 1935, p.131.
49. See ibid., 1931, p.212.
50. See Ministry of Labour Reports in Ministry of Labour Gazette, 1937-1939.
51. Annual listings of these measures can be found in the Ministry of Labour Reports published in the Ministry of Labour Gazette between 1925 and 1939.
52. See, for example, Committee on Education and Industry, The Malcolm Report, Part I, London, HMSO, 1927, p.7.
53. See ibid., p.34.
54. See ibid., p.35.
55. See Ministry of Labour Gazette, 1933, p.242.
56. See Committee on Education and Industry, op.cit., pp.82-87.
57. See W. Beveridge, op.cit., p.72. It should be noted that most of the special training and instructional provisions for adults were aimed specifically at the 18-25 age group.
58. See N. Adler and R.H. Tawney, Boy and Girl Labour, Women's Industrial Council, 1909.
59. See J. Harris, op.cit., p.350.
60. See Committee on Education and Industry, op.cit., pp.48 and 87.

62. Ibid., p.37.
63. See ibid., p.41 and Valentine A. Bell, Junior Instruction Centres and Their Future, A report to the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, Edinburgh, 1934, p.1.
64. See V.A. Bell, op.cit., pp.xv and 1-8, and Committee on Education and Industry, op.cit., pp.41-44.
65. See Committee on Education and Industry, op.cit., pp.40-43.
66. See ibid., p.47.
67. See V.A. Bell, op.cit., p.58.
68. See V.A. Bell, op.cit., pp.42-58 and Committee on Education and Industry, op.cit., pp.47-48.
69. See Committee on Education and Industry, op.cit., pp.43, 45-46 and 92.
70. See ibid., pp.44-45.
71. See ibid., pp.37-38 and 52-54.
72. See ibid., pp.54-81.
73. See ibid., p.22.
74. See above, Chapter 1, p.36.
75. See V.A. Bell, op.cit., p.5.
76. See Ministry of Labour Gazette, 1934, p.271.
77. These figures can be found in the Ministry of Labour Gazettes covering the relevant years.
78. See the Ministry of Labour Report in the Ministry of Labour Gazette, 1933.
79. See John Maynard Keynes, The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, Macmillan University Press, 1973.
Summary based on Michael Stewart op.cit., pp.78-141.
80. See J.A. Garraty, Unemployment in History: Economic Thought and Public Policy, Harper and Row, London, 1978, p.225.
81. See ibid., p.228.
82. See W. Beveridge op.cit., pp.110-122.
83. See B. Showler, op.cit., p.37.

- 84. See W. Beveridge, op.cit., pp.259-274.

- 85. See, for example, R.C.O. Matthews: 'Why Has Britain Had Full Employment since the War?', Economic Journal, September 1968.

- 86. See B. Showler, op.cit., p.37.

- 87. See ibid., pp.38-39.

CHAPTER 3THE MANPOWER SERVICES COMMISSION
AND SPECIAL MEASURES1. Pre-YOP Special Measures

When considering the MSC's initial response to the rising levels of unemployment in the mid-seventies, it is important to keep in mind how the Keynesian macro-economic setting of the philosophy of active manpower policy influenced the perception of unemployment as a problem. The postwar period, in which the problem of unemployment by and large appeared to have been solved, gave rise to considerable confidence in the efficacy of Keynesian macro-economic policy. All that seemed to be necessary was the fine-tuning of this macro-economic policy in order to avoid the build-up of inflationary pressures around labour bottlenecks and mismatches. Within the analysis of active manpower policy, beyond a certain residual regional problem, unemployment was viewed as essentially a short-term frictional and cyclical phenomenon, arising from the imperfect organisation of the labour market and the insensitivity of the deflationary mechanism used to put the brake on inflation. There might then be periodic rises of unemployment, but the real underlying problem was the shortages and mismatches that were blocking sustained inflation-free economic growth.

Despite the fact that unemployment had been rising as an underlying trend since 1966, and despite the fact that it had exceeded the million mark in January 1972, it was predominantly in terms of the above analysis that the future role of the MSC in relation to unemployment was originally envisaged. A Labour MP drew attention to the apparent contradiction involved during the debate that followed the Conservative Government's first announcement, in November 1972, of its plans to set up the MSC. The MP, Mr. Molloy, took issue with the Secretary of State in the following terms:

"Does the right hon. Gentleman agree that there is a distinct relationship between the statement he made apropos the establishment of this Commission and the subject of unemployment which we were discussing a few minutes ago? It seems absurd that we should be regarding a manpower problem in one statement as though we have not enough work people in this country, whereas a few minutes ago we were talking about the problem of recording the number of unemployed".⁽¹⁾

The understanding of unemployment as a transient and secondary problem was further encouraged and reinforced by the peculiarly unrealistic economic circumstances that prevailed immediately prior to the MSC's establishment. The 'U-turn' in Conservative policy previously alluded to involved a substantial reflation of the economy. Major tax cuts and other complementary measures announced by the Chancellor, Anthony Barber, in the April 1972 budget initiated a period of rapid economic expansion that became known as the 'Barber Boom'.⁽²⁾ At first rapid growth was achieved; but by the latter half of 1973 momentum was being lost and a number of serious problems were emerging, including the appearance of bottlenecks and shortages in the labour market. The employment exchanges had more vacancies on their books than at any time since 1951, and employers affected by bottlenecks and shortages were crying out for more skilled labour. An article published in the Economist in November 1973 conveys something of the atmosphere at the time.⁽³⁾ Having illustrated the problem, it stated that the "first job (of the newly created Commission) should be to produce a policy for dealing with labour shortage".⁽⁴⁾ It went on to express anxiety about the effects of the raising of the school-leaving age, and to suggest ways in which more women and pensioners might be encouraged to participate in the labour market, and even contemplated the possibility of more immigration. Looking back with hindsight, it seems extraordinary that informed observers could have made such statements less than a decade before unemployment exceeded the three million mark and equally well informed observers began predicting that this could be the permanent level for the rest of the eighties.⁽⁵⁾ Yet, when considering how the MSC has

reacted to the growing problem of unemployment, it must always be borne in mind how rapidly circumstances and opinions have changed over the comparatively brief period of its existence.

Indeed, even in the short period of time between the publication of the article I have referred to in the Economist and the official launching of the MSC in January 1974, there was a dramatic change in labour market prospects. The Barber Boom had carried the seeds of its own destruction from the beginning,⁽⁶⁾ and its inevitable collapse was hastened by the onset of the oil supply crisis in October 1973 and the miner's strike a month later.⁽⁷⁾ In December the Conservative Government was forced to take drastic action to deflate aggregate demand, and this was soon to be followed by the imposition of the three day week.⁽⁸⁾ Thus, even as the MSC was being set up the balance of prospects in the labour market was being tilted strongly in the direction of higher unemployment.

Hence, at the first meeting of the new Commission in January, it was decided that it was necessary to make contingency plans for the introduction of special measures should there be a substantial rise in the level of unemployment.⁽⁹⁾ These plans took two forms. First, the TSA was asked to examine what training initiatives it could launch in response to a deteriorating unemployment situation over the coming year. Secondly, Santosh Mukherjee was commissioned to make "a wide-ranging review of the likely effects of various future levels of unemployment on different groups in the labour market and of manpower policies which might ease them".⁽¹⁰⁾

Mukherjee's findings were published in a booklet entitled There's work to be done. The views expressed in this publication were his own and not those of the Commission. Nevertheless, the document was significant: first, because it set out clearly, and for the first time in this country, the rationale within the wider framework of active manpower policy for the adoption of special

measures in response to unemployment; secondly, because much of what it recommended was eventually to be adopted and implemented as official MSC policy. It will be remembered from the account of the origins of the MSC that Mukherjee was a leading exponent of active manpower policy, in particular as practised in Sweden. In his comparative study of Swedish and British manpower policies, he had been particularly impressed by the response of Swedish manpower policy during periods of deflation and comparatively high unemployment.⁽¹¹⁾ This response took a dual form: the expansion of training programmes and the implementation of various schemes of job creation. By these two means the Swedes were able to cater for two thirds of those who would otherwise be unemployed. In There's Work to be done, Mukherjee made the case for a similar extension of the scope of active manpower policy in Britain, to include special measures to counteract unemployment.⁽¹²⁾

His analysis started from a consideration of the prospects for the labour market in the coming year. As we have seen, following the peak of over a million reached at the beginning of 1972, unemployment fell rapidly over the next two years in response to a reflationary macro-economic policy. Consequently, the average level during 1973 dropped back down to 0.6 million. However, by the standards of previous postwar history this was still a high level, and Mukherjee drew attention to the underlying upward trend that was distinguishable from such short-term fluctuations. Thus, for the period 1955-66 the average unemployment rate was 1.5%, between 1967 and 1969 it was 2.4%, and by 1971-73 it had reached 3.3%. Furthermore, reinforcing this upward trend was the fact that since 1967 a normal rate of economic growth ($2\frac{1}{2}$ -3%) had proved insufficient to take up the slack resulting from the average rise of productivity. At the beginning of 1974 prospects for the growth of output were poor. The rise in oil prices was adding to what was already considered to be a serious deficit in the balance of payments, and the rate of inflation was continuing to cause alarm. In these circumstances, there was negligible hope of the Government reintroducing a reflationary macro-economic policy.

already enhanced. For those in the outer labour market, as defined in structural terms according to age, he believed that some form of direct job creation programme was more suitable, albeit supplemented by further training provision. (15)

The idea that the MSC should be given a job creation role in response to rising unemployment had previously been advanced by the TUC, but it had been by no means universally accepted and had not been explicitly included in the legislative definition of the Commission's responsibilities. (16) Thus, when Mukherjee advocated that the MSC should take on such a role, he was aware of the need to argue for what was in many respects a new approach. There were of course historical precedents of public works programmes and contemporary examples, in North America and elsewhere, of the kind of direct community-orientated job creation programme that he was proposing. (17) Also in Britain there was already a small-scale example of such a scheme. This was Community Industry, which had been set up in 1972 by the National Association of Youth Clubs and was funded by the Department of Employment. It catered for unemployed young people facing particular difficulties in finding employment, and involved temporary work in supervised teams on socially useful projects. However, the scale of provision was only small, and in the context of modern British manpower policy, the case had still to be made for a larger scale intervention of this kind. (18)

Mukherjee's advocacy of a programme of direct job creation was presented explicitly in the terms of active manpower policy. Whilst its primary justification was in terms of the social welfare of those who would otherwise be left to suffer the enforced idleness of the 'dole', he argued that job creation could also be supported for its economic benefits, both short-term and long-term. (19) The immediate return would be in the productive output of the jobs created; in the longer term there would be the contribution made by the work to the development of 'social capital' which, according to Mukherjee, could also be valued in economic terms. (20)

But the question must now be asked, what implication did this extension of the scope of active manpower policy have for the relationship which has been assumed to exist between active manpower policy and the framework of Keynesian demand management? Within the philosophy of active manpower policy, it was assumed that overall levels of employment would be guaranteed in the long-term by Keynesian-style intervention at the macro-economic level, and that active manpower policy itself, was merely a mechanism of adjustment operating within the framework thus provided. As they were implemented in Sweden, special measures of job creation and training could be considered as an extension of this mechanism of adjustment. However, Mukherjee presented his proposals for special measures in response to rising unemployment more as an alternative than as an adjustment, given that a generalised policy of reflation was unlikely in the existing economic situation. Clearly, this is difficult to reconcile with the philosophy of active manpower policy as it has thus far been explained. Yet, it did not necessarily amount to a complete contradiction. Mukherjee was very aware of, and stated explicitly, the limitations of his selective measures as an alternative to macro-economic demand management:

"It is just as well to face the fact squarely that if the amount of unemployment was something like 1.2 million, which is about 5.4%, the only effective antidote would be expansion of demand by the Government through less taxes, more public expenditure and easier access to cheaper credit. More specifically, at that level of unemployment any action which the MSC might itself take (and urge upon other public or private organisations) though of some help, could not be of any great significance.

Paradoxically, selective measures for gaining something positive from the existence of unemployment are best employed when there is not a huge number of jobless people". (21)

Thus, while he may have been attempting to extend the scope of active manpower policy to include selectively directed special measures as a temporary alternative response to unemployment, Mukherjee was still working on the assumption that there was to be

some permanent wider framework of control at the macro-economic level. If this control was allowed to slip beyond a certain point, then the case for special measures, as argued in There's work to be done, would be lost.

Consistent with his conception of job creation as an extension of the legitimate functions of an active manpower policy, Mukherjee argued that the Manpower Services Commission was uniquely well-suited by its composition both to administer and to legitimise the job creation programme that he was proposing⁽²²⁾ Although the 1973 Employment and Training Act did not explicitly assign a job creation role to the Commission, Section 5 of the Act did authorise the Secretary of State for Employment to make arrangements for the purpose of providing temporary employment for the unemployed; furthermore, there was nothing in the Act's broad definition of the MSC's general functions to prevent the Secretary of State from using the Commission as his agent in this purpose.

However, the Labour Secretary of State, Michael Foot, appears to have been reluctant to invoke this statutory power.⁽²³⁾ The MSC passed on Mukherjee's proposals to the Department of Employment in the summer of 1974, but it was not until more than a year later that action was taken upon his recommendation for a job creation programme.⁽²⁴⁾ During this intervening period, unemployment continued to rise, rapidly approaching the level at which Mukherjee had warned that special measures would fail to have a significant impact. Ironically, it was the repassing of the million mark in July 1975 that was one of the factors that eventually spurred the Labour Government into action.⁽²⁵⁾

The allocation of £30m for the launching of the Job Creation Programme (J.C.P.) was announced in September 1975, as part of a 'job creation package' which also included an extension of the Temporary Employment Subsidy, the launching of the Recruitment

Subsidy for School leavers and an extra £20m for industrial training.⁽²⁶⁾ As envisaged by Mukherjee, JCP aimed to provide temporary (up to a year) worthwhile jobs for those who would otherwise be unemployed. Furthermore, it gave priority to those age groups constituting the outer labour market, that is to say, young people aged 16-24 years and the over-50s. The mode of operation of the programme was to be through the provision of grants by the MSC to reimburse the approved costs of various labour-intensive projects which were put forward and run by sponsors from the community. Approved costs covered wages, which were to be paid at the appropriate local rate for the job, plus the employers' national insurance contributions. In addition up to 10% of the labour costs could be paid to help off-set the running costs of projects. The administration was to be carried out through a network of ten area offices, and the decisions on sponsors' applications for finance were to be made by Area Action Committees consisting of representatives of local employers' organisations, trade unions, local authority officials and voluntary organisations under an independent chairman. This plan appeared to embody the approach that Mukherjee had recommended for those in the outer labour market. However, the programme was to be operated under the very circumstances in which he had doubted whether such a special measure could make any significant impact.

When Mukherjee proposed that the MSC should take on a job creation role, he made clear his opinion that if unemployment reached "something like 1.2 million, no action taken by the MSC could be of any great significance."⁽²⁷⁾ By the time that JCP was launched in October 1975, unemployment had reached 1.1 million. Two months later, the 1.2 million mark was crossed, and since then unemployment has not been below that level again. When the programme ended in December 1978, the monthly average for the level of unemployment over its lifetime was 1.4 million.⁽²⁸⁾

Clearly, under these circumstances, the case that Mukherjee had made for job creation as an extension of active manpower policy was no longer applicable.⁽²⁹⁾ And when perhaps it had been applicable, in the year between the completion of Mukherjee's Report and unemployment crossing the million mark, the Government had been unwilling to implement such a measure. This all points to the conclusion that the Job Creation Programme fulfilled a different function in the context of wider Government policy from that which had originally been intended for it by its leading advocate. This alternative function, and its distinction from the original intentions held for the programme, were plainly stated in a critical article that appeared in the Times Educational Supplement in April 1976:

"JCP is a palliative. It was designed from the highest of motives, but has been adopted for public relations purposes by a Government legitimately concerned with the political consequences of the highest levels of youth unemployment since the 1930s".⁽³⁰⁾

In order to understand more fully how JCP came to be cast in the role of palliative, it is necessary now to fill in some of the wider context of the Labour Government's policies during this period. In particular, something must be said about the 'social contract'.

The social contract first took form in 1973 when the Labour Party was still in opposition.⁽³¹⁾ At this stage it consisted of a vague agreement to the effect that the TUC would co-operate with a future Labour Government in the fight against inflation, in return for that Government enacting certain measures to re-organise the control of industry and the distribution of wealth in favour of working people. This agreement was then made the centrepiece of the February 1974 election manifesto, Labour's ability to work with the unions being presented in direct contrast to the Tories' policy of confrontation.⁽³²⁾

Labour won the election on this basis, but only secured enough seats to form a minority Government. In the comparatively short period before the next election in October, a start was made on carrying out the commitments that had been made to the trade unions in the February manifesto. The Industrial Relations Act was repealed and the apparatus of statutory incomes policy was gradually dismantled.⁽³³⁾ Price controls were extended, and many of the redistributive measures that had been promised were implemented in the March budget. By these means, the minority Labour Government was able to dissipate the tense atmosphere of industrial confrontation that had built up through the Heath administration, and to ensure its own political security. At the September Trades Union Congress a new social contract document laying down voluntary guidelines for collective bargaining was unanimously endorsed,⁽³⁴⁾ and a month later Labour won a small overall majority in the October 1974 election.⁽³⁵⁾

However, the cost of these achievements was to be measured in terms of a continuing decline of economic performance. There was a soaring rate of inflation and a huge balance of payments deficit, and this situation was exacerbated by the steep rise in oil prices and the onset of an international trade recession.⁽³⁶⁾ It was clear that once the Labour Government had secured its political position in the October election, action would have to be taken to restore control over the economy. This action amounted to a reversal of the economic strategy that had been embarked upon over the previous eight months.⁽³⁷⁾ The policies aimed at altering the nature of control within industry were abandoned as a luxury that could not be afforded in such a difficult economic situation, and as a result, it was inevitable that the policies aimed at redistributing wealth had to be turned back in order to encourage the private investment of capital. In addition, moves were made to restrict the growth of public expenditure, and these were bound to lead to a further rise in unemployment. But it was inflation, not unemployment, that was perceived by the Government as the most serious problem. Despite the voluntary guidelines that had been adopted by the trade unions, the rate of wage increases continued to accelerate. Thus, between July 1974 and July 1975, there was an average wage rise of 31%.⁽³⁸⁾

Clearly the social contract was not working as had been intended by either of its partners. The Government began to threaten that it would have to intervene directly in order to restrain wage increases, and it seemed that the social contract might disintegrate completely, leading to a resumption of hostilities between Government and unions.⁽³⁹⁾ The situation was brought to a head by the sterling crisis of June 1975, which was a reflection of the international lack of confidence in the British Government's ability to handle its inflation and balance of payments problems.⁽⁴⁰⁾ The Labour Government's response was to set itself the target of reducing inflation to 10% by the end of the next pay round. This was to be achieved by means of a 10% limit on wage increases, for which 'voluntary' trade union cooperation was to be sought.⁽⁴¹⁾ However, if such co-operation was not forthcoming, the policy would be enforced by statute.

Less than a year earlier the trade union movement had been rallied behind the social contract as an affirmation of free collective bargaining and a rejection of all forms of incomes policy. When moving support for the policy document on Collective Bargaining and the Social Contract at the 1974 Congress, General Secretary Len Murray had stated adamantly:

"We reject statutory incomes policy, or attempts by any institution - including the TUC - to impose a rigid centralised framework on collective bargaining".⁽⁴²⁾

Yet, even before the onset of the sterling crisis in June, the TUC General Council had agreed upon the principle of a pay policy for the coming year based on a universal flat-rate increase to all wages.⁽⁴³⁾ The sterling crisis and the pressure applied by the Government then ensured the rapid adoption of the figure of £6 as the standard level for this flat-rate increase - a figure which was well below what would have been necessary to compensate an average wage for the level of price inflation over the previous year. Thus, not only was the TUC agreeing to impose the kind of rigid incomes policy that it had rejected so adamantly

only a year previously, but also it was setting the policy at a level that would almost certainly result in a reduction of real incomes for the majority of its members. (44)

Clearly there was some explaining to be done by the TUC leadership when the new policy document, The Development of the Social Contract, was presented to the 1975 Congress. The defence started from an emphasis of the depth and seriousness of the economic crisis facing the country. (45) In this difficult situation, it was argued, the Government needed the assistance of a pay policy in order to be able to continue its pursuit of the wider objectives of the contract, especially the restoration of higher levels of employment. Since January the Labour Chancellor, Denis Healey, had been threatening that deflation and increased unemployment would be unavoidable unless there was wage restraint, (46) and already in the April budget he had introduced some deflationary measures in a vain attempt to avert the imminent exchange crisis. (47) The TUC leadership, which had previously rejected any such equation between wage increases and unemployment, now accepted this argument, and managed to persuade Congress of its validity. The new policy document was approved by a convincing majority, (48) but at the same time a warning was given to the Government:

"Unless the Government is seen to be tackling the problem of unemployment, the confidence of trade unionists in this policy will erode. Unemployment is not an optional extra on top of wage restraint". (49)

The package of special job creation and training measures that was introduced in September 1975 can now be understood as the Labour Government's response to this warning. The TUC wanted the Government to adopt a policy of mild reflation accompanied by import controls, (50) but at the same time they called for the introduction of temporary special measures to cut the peak of unemployment while the upturn was awaited. The Government, already committed to a programme of spending cuts designed to bring down the public sector borrowing requirement, (51) ruled out any policy of reflation. However, with unemployment over the million mark and still rising, some token was required to demonstrate that they

were still keeping faith with the social contract. The temporary special measures being advocated by the TUC naturally presented themselves for this role.

The social contract, and the fundamental change that it underwent in the Labour Government's second year of office, thus provide the immediate political context in which the modern emergence of a special measures approach to unemployment can be understood. The particular events leading up to the announcement of the package of job creation and training measures in September 1975 have been described in some detail because they can be considered as the start of a recurring pattern of events which was to provide the context for further developments of the special measures approach, including eventually both WEP and YOP. Between July 1975 and July 1978, the social contract relationship between the TUC and the Labour Government, which had originally been constructed on the basis of a comparatively radical policy framework, became primarily a means of securing voluntary trade union adherence to annual pay policies formulated in line with the Government's economic policy priority - the so-called 'attack on inflation'.⁽⁵²⁾ At the same time increasingly severe restrictions were placed on the growth of public expenditure. Repeatedly, it was promised that an economic upturn and an accompanying reduction of unemployment were just around the corner, if only these policies were given time to bring inflation under control. But meanwhile, unemployment continued to rise rapidly from one 'intolerable' level to another,⁽⁵³⁾ and by the time that inflation was brought down to the single figure (annual percentage) target set by the Government,⁽⁵⁴⁾ the number of those out of work had stabilised in a pattern of annual variation around the figure of 1.5 million.

In this situation, the TUC continued to advocate its alternative strategy of reflation and selective import controls, and the Government continued to ignore it. Instead, while the promised economic upturn was awaited, there were frequent packages of temporary

special measures. Whenever continued trade union cooperation seemed to be in jeopardy, such packages were produced as evidence that the Government was attempting to keep to its side of the social contract bargain. Thus, in the year covered by the £6 flat rate pay policy, there were no less than three such packages, in addition to the September set of measures that has already been mentioned.(55)

The fact that JCP and other special measures were playing such a role in relation to the social contract was widely recognised amongst informed commentators at the time. In the context of a general policy of public expenditure restraint, the extra money spent on special measures could only be explained as a form of palliative, aimed in particular to buy off the trade unions on whose continued support the whole Government strategy relied. The amounts involved were not sufficient to make a significant impact on the general level of unemployment and, if they had have been, they would have cancelled out the policy of public spending cuts.(56)

In a highly critical article published in The Times Educational Supplement at the beginning of 1976,(57) the Labour MP for Berwick, John Mackintosh juxtaposed the cutbacks taking place in the general level of public expenditure, and in particular within education, with the increasing amounts being spent on special measures of job creation. The Government's reason for spending on programmes such as JCP, he explained as follows:

"The origin of this is simply that the Government are seriously worried that their concordat with the unions - which underpins the £6 flat rate incomes policy - will breakdown when the time comes to produce the next phase of their incomes policy after July".(58)

This political reasoning, he argued, had to be kept carefully apart from the economic reasoning behind education cuts:

"Job creation is to impress certain groups with political power; education cuts are part of a major attempt to get the public borrowing requirement under control".(59)

The inconsistency between the policy of public expenditure restraint and the extra expenditure devoted to temporary special measures was further highlighted by particular features of the way in which the Job Creation Programme operated. The work provided was supposed to be of benefit both to those being employed and to the community as a whole. Yet, it also had to be work which:(a) would not have otherwise been done; (b) could be easily started up and stopped on a temporary basis; and (c) would not lead to the making of any profit. The latter regulation effectively excluded private employers from taking part in the programme. Consequently, the vast majority of sponsors were local authorities. Encouraged by the offer of funds from the MSC, these bodies provided temporary work on projects that, in effect , were not of sufficient importance to have been mounted otherwise. Thus, at the same time as local authorities were having to cut back on their priority programmes, they were being asked, through JCP, to devise new projects that by definition were of only marginal importance.(60)

The inherent problems of this situation were compounded by the manner in which the programme was launched. Although the Government had originally been slow to take up the idea of job creation, once the decision was made to go ahead, they expected the programme to be implemented at great speed.(61) Nobody in the MSC had direct experience of administering such a programme, and none of the potential sponsors had prior knowledge of how to propose and set up suitable schemes, and yet, between them they were required to come up with £30 million worth of schemes almost instantly.

Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that many of the schemes setup during the early days of JCP lacked imagination

ployed under the Poor Law and with 19th century experiments in job creation. A notorious example was a beach cleaning exercise mounted in Sunderland.⁽⁶²⁾ Although subsequently more imaginative and worthwhile schemes were devised, the image of a forlorn group of youngsters picking up debris along a vast windswept tract of shoreline was to be associated with the programme for the rest of its duration.

Another serious problem encountered by JCP was that of financial mismanagement. The speed at which the programme grew, and the MSC's concern to keep bureaucracy to a minimum, meant that financial control was often lax.⁽⁶³⁾ As part of the attempt to provide more interesting schemes, voluntary and community associations were increasingly encouraged to participate in the programme. But often these non-local authority sponsors lacked the necessary financial experience to handle the large sums of money involved without close supervision. A number of financial scandals resulted as a consequence, and these attracted further adverse publicity to the programme.

In defence of JCP it can be said that it did succeed in creating a lot of jobs in a remarkably short time, most of which were filled by young people. Thus, during the three year period of its existence, the programme created approximately 140,000 temporary job opportunities at a total cost of £192m; and of the estimated 200,000 people who took part, 72% were aged under 25.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Also it is true to say that it included a number of interesting and innovative schemes.⁽⁶⁵⁾ But it was the bad examples of futility and financial mismanagement that were predominant in the public image of the programme, and these gave further emphasis to the paradoxical position of special job creation measures within the context of a general policy of public expenditure restraint.

The criticism encountered by JCP did not lead either the Government

special measure with which to respond to the rapidly increasing level of youth unemployment. During the year covered by the £6 pay policy, the general level of unemployment rose from just over one million in August 1975, to 1½ million by August 1976.⁽⁶⁶⁾ Over the same period, unemployment amongst the under-20s rose from 80,000 to nearly 200,000.⁽⁶⁷⁾ As has already been pointed out, these large increases took the level of unemployment well beyond the maximum at which Mukherjee's argument for special measures as an extension of active manpower policy could be sustained. But the political argument for special measures, in terms of doing what was necessary to maintain trade union cooperation within the social contract became stronger than ever under these circumstances. In particular, it was important that there should be some new response to the sensitive problem of youth unemployment.

The Work Experience Programme (W.E.P.) was announced in September 1976, as part of yet another package of special measures which also included the replacement of the Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers by the Youth Employment Subsidy. This was exactly a year after the announcement of JCP, and the two events can be understood as occupying the same position within the annual cycle of negotiations concerned with the agreement of an incomes policy. In the same way as the announcement of JCP had followed the TUC's agreement to the £6 flat rate pay policy in the summer of 1975, the announcement of WEP followed the TUC's agreement to a further year of pay policy in the summer of 1976. This time the norm for wage increases was set at 5%.⁽⁶⁸⁾

During the previous year of pay policy, the process of scaling down planned public expenditure had been continued by the February 1976 White Paper on Public Expenditure and intensified by the subsequent imposition of a system of cash limits.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Although certain tax concessions were given in the April budget as part of the bargaining process with the trade unions, the Government had no intention of initiating a more generalised policy of reflation.

Yet, in order to secure the renewal of the social contract, it was still prepared to commit itself to the restoration of full employment through the creation of a million new jobs over the next three years. Given that this commitment underlay the TUC's agreement to another year of pay restraint, it can be understood that some token of the Government's resolve to tackle unemployment was at least as important as it had been the year before. (70)

In this situation it is not surprising that little attempt was made to justify the new special measures introduced within a wider philosophy of manpower policy. The niceties of Mukherjee's argument had long been overwhelmed by political expediency. Consequently the case for the adoption of WEP was made principally in terms of the need to correct specific shortcomings of JCP. As had been the case with job creation, the emergence of the idea of work experience as a response to youth unemployment was closely associated with the trade union movement. Some form of work experience programme was first suggested by the Welsh TUC at the beginning of 1976. (71) The idea was then rapidly taken up, and canvassed for, by the trade union movement as a whole and by certain voluntary organisations. By July the MSC was examining the possibility of introducing such a programme in the Autumn. (72)

JCP had run into many of the problems traditionally associated with attempts to generate jobs artificially without interfering with the normal workings of the labour market. The effective exclusion of private employers from participation as sponsors was widely regarded as a major drawback, (73) and the content of the work, as well as sometimes being futile, was often regarded by both employers and unions as not relevant to the 'real world of work'. (74) In contrast, WEP was specifically designed to attract private employers as sponsors, and gave particular emphasis to the realism of the work experience that was provided.

four elements: induction, planned work experience over a range of jobs, an opportunity for training or further education, and personal counselling. The target of the programme was exclusively young people, entry being restricted to those unemployed between the ages of 16 and 18 years. Payment took the form of an allowance, originally £16 per week - a level considered high enough to act as an incentive for young people to join the programme rather than relying on unemployment or supplementary benefit, and yet not so high as to deter anyone from entering training or permanent employment. A separate organisational structure based on 8 area units was established in order to carry out the administration of the programme.

The stated objectives of WEP were to enable young unemployed people:

- "(1) to learn about the disciplines, demands and satisfactions of working life;
- (2) to find out something of their aptitudes, likes and dislikes;
- (3) to help them to learn to work and communicate with adults in order to assist in the transition from the world of school to that of work;
- (4) to enable them to learn a few simple basic skills and thus to gain confidence and motivation in looking for a job".(75)

The main criterion for assessing the programme's achievement of these objectives was to be the success or otherwise of its 'graduates' in finding permanent employment.(76) A major criticism of JCP was that having provided people with up to a year's temporary employment it then simply dumped them back into the dole queues.(77) Within WEP far more emphasis was to be given to placement rates as a gauge of success.

One important point that should be noted is that, although WEP did not claim to create proper jobs, neither was it presented as a proper training programme. Another of the criticisms aimed at JCP was that it did not provide sufficient training: only 10% of

opportunity for training or further education;⁽⁷⁹⁾ but, as the director of the programme himself acknowledged, those taking part "do not.....receive training as the word is commonly understood".⁽⁸⁰⁾ Yet the young people concerned were to be referred to as 'trainees' and, as such, they received an allowance rather than a wage at the rate for the job as was the case with JCP. No serious attempt was made by the MSC to justify the apparent inconsistency involved in this situation. Referring to the young people as 'trainees' was said to be merely a matter of convenience;⁽⁸¹⁾ Paying them only as trainees, when they were working and not being given proper training, was a paradox that went by unmentioned, though presumably it was convenient too. Considering the prominent part that the Work Experience on Employers Premises element was to come to play within the Youth Opportunities Programme, this was a significant gap in the MSC's rationale.

Although WEP, like JCP, was set up at a great speed,⁽⁸²⁾ it managed to avoid gaining such a bad reputation and was generally adjudged to be a success in its own terms.⁽⁸³⁾ Despite a slow start,⁽⁸⁴⁾ the programme eventually attracted more sponsors than it needed to generate the 30,000 places originally planned. Thus, by the end of March 1978 when WEP was incorporated into the new Youth Opportunities Programme, 17,463 schemes had been approved, offering more than 54,000 places, at an estimated cost of 14.7m.⁽⁸⁵⁾ Approximately 80% of these were sponsored by private employers.⁽⁸⁶⁾ Some criticism was made to the effect that this quantitative achievement was only achieved at the expense of quality,⁽⁸⁷⁾ and certainly it is true that in terms of providing opportunities for training and further education, WEP did little better than JCP.⁽⁸⁸⁾ But in terms of its principle criterion of success, the placement rate of those leaving the programme, WEP undoubtedly performed well. A follow-up survey revealed that 72% of WEP trainees were in full-time employment three months after they had left the programme.⁽⁸⁹⁾ The equivalent figure for JCP was 53%,⁽⁹⁰⁾ and this was at a time when employment prospects, in general, were more favourable.

Both JCP and WEP were originally conceived of only as temporary measures, but there was a different reason for why each was assumed to be such. JCP was assumed to be temporary because, at the time of its launch, both the problem of unemployment in general, and the problem of youth unemployment in particular, were assumed to be of a short-term nature.⁽⁹¹⁾ However, by the time that WEP was being launched (and despite the fact that the promise of a return to full employment was still being held out to the unions), it was beginning to be recognised that these problems were of a more long-term nature, and that the problem of youth unemployment in particular would require a more permanent response.⁽⁹²⁾ Thus WEP was not considered to be a temporary measure because it was thought that the problem of youth unemployment was temporary, but rather because by then it was recognised that such a programme could only be a stop-gap measure until a more comprehensive and permanent response could be developed. Thus it was that only a month after the launch of WEP, the MSC announced in Towards A Comprehensive Manpower Policy the setting up of a working party to examine the feasibility of a new and more comprehensive programme for the young unemployed. The outcome of this, as we have already seen, was the Holland Report.

2. The Holland Report

The Holland Report provided the blueprint for the Youth Opportunities Programme. As such, it must be regarded as the key document in this account. On the one hand, it marked the culmination of the development of the special measures approach to the relief of youth unemployment that has been described above. On the other hand, it marked the starting point of the history of YOP, and of a process of development that was to lead beyond the special measures approach. Subsequent analyses will be concerned with this history, and in particular, will consider the extent to which the development and implementation of the programme fulfilled the aims and objectives that were originally set out for it in the Holland Report. With this purpose in mind, it is necessary now to provide a clear and accurate account of what the Report actually said. This will be presented first in a straightforward and uncritical manner. Then, it will be analysed more critically in the context both of the development of MSC policy, and of the wider political and economic environment.

The Working Party which was responsible for the Holland Report included representatives of the CBI, the TUC, the Careers Service and Government Departments, as well as the Commission and its Agencies. It was chaired by Geoffrey Holland, the MSC official whose name was subsequently attached to the unanimous Report that was produced.⁽⁹³⁾ In assessing the feasibility of a new programme of opportunities for unemployed young people, the Working Party was asked to take into account the following factors: (a) long-term trends in the employment and unemployment of young people in Great Britain; (b) experience of all the measures so far taken to help unemployed young people; (c) relevant long-term developments in the training and further education field; (d) costs; (e) organisational implications; (f) directly relevant experience in other countries. As part of the study, certain pieces of research were undertaken. Two surveys were commissioned on the views of young people towards various aspects of employment and unemployment, and one on the attitudes of employers towards the recruitment and employment of young people. Also, specific studies

were made of the foreign experience of unemployment among young people, and of the scope for opportunities for unemployed young people in community service.

The style of the Holland Report was set by the terms in which it was introduced and it is worth noting once again some of the exact language used. During 1976, over 800,000 16-18 year olds had registered as unemployed - the highest figure since the end of the Second World War. The time had now come, it was stated, "to turn a major problem and cost into an opportunity and a benefit". The special measures taken so far by the Government had been "piecemeal and temporary". What was needed was "a new programme of opportunities for young people", offering "an effective bridge to permanent employment". The programme to be presented in the Report was designed "to bring young people the kind of help they most need in the form they want it". It thus aimed "to demonstrate by deeds rather than words that society cares about them, and through them, about its own future". (94)

The first part of the Report was concerned with an analysis of past trends and future prospects for the employment and unemployment of young people. The evidence available for the past confirmed the continuation of the trends that Mukherjee had identified in 1974. While the industrial and occupational distribution of young people's employment had remained comparatively stable, there had been a fall in the number of young people entering employment and a large rise in the number of unemployed young people. The level of youth unemployment rose and fell sharply in an annual cycle based around the school leaving dates, and there was also considerable local variation. However, the underlying national trend was consistently upwards, rising at a rate three times as fast as that for unemployment amongst all ages. Thus, between January 1972 and 1977, there had been a 120% increase in the numbers of young people (16-17 year olds) unemployed, compared with a 45% rise for the working population as a whole. When the demand side was taken into account, the comparative deterioration of young people's prospects was revealed even more starkly: between

January 1974 and 1977 the ratio of the numbers unemployed to the numbers of vacancies registered at Careers Offices rose twentyfold compared with a fivefold increase in the ratio of total unemployment to all vacancies.

In addition to such statistics the Report referred in this context to the results of the research that had been commissioned. In particular, it noted the widespread belief amongst employers that the calibre of young people had deteriorated over recent years, both in terms of motivation and basic education. These factors were cited as reasons for not recruiting young people. Nevertheless, most employers expected to continue to employ the same proportion of young people as before. Amongst young people, it was noted that the impact of unemployment was most severe on those who had few or no qualifications. The study of foreign experience revealed that rising youth unemployment was an international problem, and that there had been a disproportionate increase in the numbers of young people unemployed compared with the general level of unemployment in each of the major EEC countries. Although the Working Party considered the question of whether youth unemployment was structural or cyclical, it did not provide an answer. It simply concluded that the problem was serious and worsening, and that young people with low qualifications were the most vulnerable.

Looking to the future, the Report drew attention to the fact that the existing problems were likely to be exacerbated by the increased number of young people expected to come onto the labour market each year until 1981, when it was estimated that there would be 50,000 more young people entering the labour market than in 1976. Over the same period, the total labour supply was predicted to have increased from 25.75 million to 26.5 million. Considering the implications of such an increase, the Report referred to an estimate that it would require a 3% p.a. growth of output simply to keep unemployment at a steady level, and a 5% p.a. growth for full employment to be restored in five years. The conclusion was drawn that it would be prudent to plan on the assumption that there might not be a rapid return to low levels of unemployment.

In an attempt to produce more exact estimates of the levels of youth unemployment that would have to be planned for over the next five years, the Report made three projections of the future time-path of total unemployment. The most pessimistic of these projections assumed that total unemployment would reach a level of 1.60 million during 1978, before a moderate cyclical recovery brought the numbers back down to 1.35 million by August 1981. The implications of such a projection for youth unemployment were that the numbers might rise to almost 450,000 in the third quarter of 1978 and to more than 350,000 in the third quarter of 1981. All the projections agreed that the levels of unemployment would be coming down between 1978 and 1980, their differences were only with regard to how high a level would be reached in the meantime and how quickly it would fall back down again. The general conclusion was that plans would have to take into account the fact that the return to lower levels of unemployment might be slow; nevertheless, such a return was always still assumed.

The next stage of the analysis made by the Holland Report was a review of the services and programmes that were currently available for unemployed 16-18 year olds. In addition to the on-going services of education, training and job placement, it was noted that since the early 1970s there had been a rapid expansion of special Government programmes designed to provide various kinds of opportunities for the young unemployed. These fell into five main categories: temporary employment, work experience, incentive training grants, direct training and rehabilitation, and employment subsidies.

The details of the temporary employment and work experience opportunities offered through JCP and WEP, and to a lesser extent through Community Industry, have already been described above. Thus, it is only necessary to note here the scale on which these programmes were operating at the time when they were being examined by the Working Party. For the year 1976-77, Community Industry and JCP were offering 4,000 and 17,000 places respectively, and WEP, which was expanding rapidly, had a throughput of 8,000

trainees. The other kinds of programme, although some of them have been mentioned above, have not yet been fully explained. Hence, they require a more detailed description.

Incentive training grants were designed to offset the effects of the recession on the levels of young people being trained in industry, and to help avoid shortfalls of skilled personnel. They were funded by the Training Services Agency (T.S.A.) of the MSC and administered mainly through Industrial Training Boards. There were two main kinds: 'premium grants' which secured training within employment, and 'training awards' which provided training directly under the auspices of Industrial Training Boards. In 1976-77, nearly 43,000 such opportunities had been offered, though only some 37,000 had been taken up.

Direct training was run by the TSA and included a variety of courses of work preparation for young people with differing vocational needs. The two major schemes were Occupational Selection Courses and Short Industrial Courses; in addition, there were Preparatory Courses and Wider Opportunities Courses of a more specialised remedial nature. Rehabilitation training for disabled people was provided by the Employment Services Agency (E.S.A.) of the MSC through its network of Employment Rehabilitation Centres. This included the provision of a number of Work Preparation Courses for young people who had just left school and were finding it difficult to enter employment because of severe physical or mental handicaps. Between them, these direct training and rehabilitation courses had a throughput of 15,500 young people in 1976-77.

Employment subsidies aimed specifically at young people were first introduced in October 1975, as part of the package of special measures to alleviate youth unemployment that had also included the introduction of JCP. The Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers, as it was known, offered £5 per week for 26 weeks to employers taking on school and college leavers. The problem was that the

majority (76% it was estimated on the basis of surveys) of the young people taken on under the scheme would have been employed anyway. Consequently, it was replaced a year later by the Yount Employment Subsidy which was aimed more specifically at young people having difficulty in obtaining employment, and consisted of a subsidy of £10 a week for 26 weeks offered to employers taking on young people who had been unemployed for six months or more. In addition, there were certain other schemes and subsidies, like the Job Release Scheme and the Temporary Employment Subsidy, which although not directly aimed at young people included them amongst their beneficiaries. In total, it was estimated that 30,300 young people benefitted from these various kinds of employment subsidy in the year 1976-77.

The combined throughput of all the above-mentioned programmes in 1976-77 was 117,000, and the gross cost of this provision was put at £106.2 million. The provisional estimate made prior to the Working Party for the combined throughput in 1977-78 was 156,900. Concluding its review of existing provisions, the Holland Report noted as a considerable achievement the speed at which this number of opportunities had been created, most of them having been brought into existence over the two previous years. However, it also drew attention to a number of limitations and shortcomings that were to be borne in mind when considering plans for a replacement programme.

First there was the fact that, despite the large numbers of opportunities created, the scale of provision was still inadequate and many young people were experiencing spells of unemployment without there being an opportunity available to them. Secondly, the temporary nature of the existing schemes had often inhibited employers and educational institutions from making provisions on a large scale. Thirdly, the piecemeal way in which schemes had been introduced had led to a number of problems. Different agencies were operating different schemes using separate organisational structures. This made the co-ordination of provisions in relation to the particular needs of localities extremely difficult, and there was often the

danger of different programmes competing against each other. This lack of co-ordination was also reflected in the wide disparities between different schemes as regards the level and form of remuneration paid to trainees, and the methods of calculating these. Thus some would receive wages, other allowances; some wages were 'the rate for the job', others were according to age; some allowances were simply flat-rate, others included additional allowances for meals and transport costs. Such inconsistencies made the situation highly confusing, both for those providing the opportunities, and for the individual young person trying to select the scheme best suited to their needs. They also obstructed attempts that were being made to provide for movement and progression between different schemes.

The conclusions drawn from this analysis of existing provision were as follows:

- "a. that the existing schemes for young people need to be developed and in some cases supplemented by new types of opportunity; and
- b. that all these schemes need to be brought together in a single, coherent programme, comprehensive in its coverage and responsive to the differing needs of unemployed young people in different parts of the country." (95)

The Working Party based its plan for such a programme on the two following principles:

- "a. that the new programme must be designed to meet the personal needs of individual unemployed young people as they seek to secure permanent employment; and
- b. that individual elements in the programme and the programme as a whole must not be more financially attractive than being in full-time work or damage the incentive to young people in full-time education to continue their courses." (96)

Elaborating further upon its aims for the future programme, the Report made it clear that it was not attempting to provide a comprehensive approach to work preparation for all young people, but only to ensure that all young unemployed people were offered the opportunity of some constructive alternative to a job. However, at the same time, it was acknowledged that in the long-term the programme proposed might become a part of a more general provision for all young people, and that in principle programmes catering for the needs of unemployed young people should not be considered as standing apart from policies directed at young people in general. In addition, it was emphasised that in order to meet the needs of young unemployed people as individuals, the programme would have to be sufficiently flexibly organised to provide a variety of vocationally relevant opportunities, and to allow for links and progressions to be made between its various elements. Yet, as well as meeting the needs of individual young people, it would have to be responsible to local labour market conditions and to fit in as a component part of wider manpower policies.

The Report next detailed the content of the programme that had been designed to meet such specifications. The individual elements were for the most part merely continuations and extensions of previously existing schemes; what was important was that they had been organised within the framework of a single coherent programme. The opportunities to be provided were divided into two major groupings, work preparation courses and work experience.

Work preparation courses included three categories: Assessment or Employment Induction Courses (E.I.C.s), Short Industrial Courses (S.I.C.s), and Remedial or Preparatory Courses. The main element of the first category was to be two week EICs designed to help young people improve their employability and social skills, and to give them an opportunity to assess what kind of employment they might find suitable. The model for these came from the first module of the existing TSA Occupational Selection Courses.

The second category of work preparation course consisted of a further development and extension of existing TSA Short Industrial Courses. These were 13 week vocational courses designed to introduce young people to the skills required for a fairly specific, though broad, occupational area, and to help equip them to deal with the demands of adult working life in general. It was emphasised that the scale and nature of this provision should be closely related to the actual and potential employment opportunities in the locality.

The third category was to be a continuation of the remedial courses already provided by the ESA and to a smaller extent by the TSA. But it was emphasised that the primary statutory responsibility for such remedial educational work with young people remained with the Local Education Authorities.

The work experience side of the programme was divided into four different categories within the Report: Work Experience on Employers' Premises (W.E.E.P.), Project-Based Work Experience (P.B.W.E.), Training Workshops (T.W.s), and Community Service (C.S.). It was specified that each of these different kinds of work experience would provide the four features included in the existing Work Experience Programme - induction, planned work experience, an opportunity for training or further education, and counselling - but each in a distinctive form, so as to be able to cater for the differing needs and interests of individuals.

WEPP was envisaged as an extension of the existing WEP, with more emphasis being placed on the provision of associated training and further education, and the quality of induction and counselling. It was suggested that the average length of such courses should be 6 months. It was also noted that, if provided on a large scale, this kind of work experience might come to be regarded by employers as a useful vehicle for assessment and a normal avenue for recruitment. Were this to happen, it was said that it might be necessary to review the basis of funding such opportunities.

The second category, Project-Based Work Experience, involved the establishment of non-profit making projects supervised by small numbers of adult employees, and designed to give young people up to a year's experience of carrying out useful work. This form of work experience was seen as largely taking the place of the provision for 16-18 year olds existing under JCP, which was to be succeeded by a programme confined to adults.

Training Workshops were regarded by the Report as being particularly suitable for young people at lower levels of ability and motivation who were not attracted by, or able to profit from, formal courses. Their objective was said to be "the provision of training and work experience for a group of young people working together on a number of different tasks under supervision."⁽⁹⁷⁾ The group was to produce goods and services, but the main purpose was to give the young people experience in a variety of skill areas doing a variety of different kinds of work. They were to spend up to 12 months at the scheme. A number of such workshops had already been set up under JCP; the Report envisaged a considerable expansion.

The fourth category, Community Service, was described by the Report as providing young people with the opportunity to experience a variety of forms of work, to take on responsibility, and to acquire a range of basic skills, in particular those associated with relating to people. Once again 12 months was specified as the maximum normal duration of this experience. A doubling of the number of such opportunities already being provided by existing schemes was suggested by the Report.

Two other existing schemes were referred to by the Report, Incentive Training Grants and Community Industry. Both were being reviewed separately at the time; nevertheless the Report appears to have assumed that they would have a role to play within the new programme. No further mention was made of employment subsidies.

The Report emphasised that the programme outlined above should be available to all unemployed young people, but should not be compulsory. It noted also that some concern had been expressed that young people might be drawn into the programme before they had had a chance to look for a job. However, the majority view of the Working Party was that there should be no mandatory waiting period for eligibility and no closed season for school leavers.

The organisational unity between the elements of the new programme was given expression in the proposal that all young people in the programme should receive the same level of remuneration. This, it was explained, would ensure that financial considerations did not affect the young person's choice of opportunity, and in addition would facilitate linkage and progression between the different elements of the programme. Nevertheless, it was still the primary aim of each opportunity to help and encourage the young person to move as quickly as possible into normal employment, and the level of remuneration had to be consistent with this aim. The Report, taking as its basis the existing WEP allowance, proposed a level of £18 including a standard £2 allowance for travel expenses. It was assumed as a matter of course that the level of the allowance would be reviewed periodically to take account of changes in the cost of living.⁽⁹⁸⁾

The Report next addressed the question of the scale on which the programme should be mounted. It was stated that it would be pointless to attempt to provide opportunities for every unemployed young person. A programme on such a scale would seriously interfere with the normal workings of the labour market. For example, young people might be attracted into the programme, when otherwise they would have successfully found employment. Also substitution and displacement might arise. Substitution was defined as the situation in which "the employer who takes a young person on through one of the opportunities in the programme substitutes him or her for another person whom he would otherwise have recruited."⁽⁹⁹⁾ The danger was noted, in particular, that WEEP might provide employers with an expensive induction programme at public cost.

Displacement was said to occur "if young people recruited into the new programme displace workers somewhere else."⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ This, however, was not regarded as such a serious threat as substitution. Finally, it was recognised that the very success of the programme, in its major aim of making young people more competitive, was likely to affect adversely the job prospects of other age groups, unless there was a net increase in employment. Thus, it was accepted that some interference with the normal workings of the labour market was unavoidable. However, in order to minimise such interference, the scale of the programme needed to be tailored to the likely level of demand from those who would remain unemployed if there were no such programme. Estimating this level was of course problematic, but the Report suggested as a rule of thumb "that the size of the programme should be related to the stock of young people who have been unemployed for six weeks over the months when the annual cycle of youth unemployment reaches its lowest level."⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Applying this rule to the intermediate of the three projections of future youth unemployment, figures of 130,000 in 1977/78 and 124,000 in 1978/79 were arrived at.

The question of scale was next examined from the angle of supply. The major factors considered were: money, time, the need for a long-term commitment by the Government and the Commission, the availability and training of suitable staff, and the provision of physical facilities. It was concluded that by September 1978 the programme could provide a maximum number of places at any one time of 129,700 and a possible throughput of 234,200 young people each year - figures conveniently consonant with the rule of thumb estimate of likely demand. Table 1 sets out the distribution of these opportunities between the various types of scheme.⁽¹⁰²⁾ It will be noted that the gross annual cost of the total programme was calculated at £168.31m (at 1976 prices), compared to the existing commitment of approximately £105m for programmes in the financial year 1977-78.⁽¹⁰³⁾ The net cost of the new programme, taking into account savings on supplementary benefit, unemployment benefit and other costs of unemployment was put at £95m, and it was pointed out that the figure could be lowered further by aid provided from the European Social Fund.

TABLE 1 THE ORIGINAL PLAN OF THE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME

	Assumed Average Duration	Places	Throughput ¹	Cost £m
1. Work Preparation Courses				
a. Assessment or Employment Induction Courses	2 weeks	3,000	60,000	8.32
b. Short Industrial Courses	3 months	8,000	25,000	22.57
c. Remedial or preparatory courses	26 weeks (max)	1,700 (approx.)	2,200	2.32
2. Work Experience				
a. Work experience on employers' premises	6 months	30,000	60,000	28.08
b. Project-based work experience	1 year	15,000	15,000	14.04
c. Training workshops	1 year	10,000	10,000	9.36
d. Community service	1 year	15,000	15,000	14.04
e. Capital contribution to (b)–(d) above	—	—	—	8.42
3. Additional Staff for Local Areas, etc.	—	—	—	2.63
TOTAL		82,700	187,200	109.78
4. Other Programmes				
a. Incentive training grants	1 year	41,500	41,500	46.00
b. Community Industry	1 year	5,500	5,500	12.53
OVERALL TOTAL		129,700	234,200	168.31

¹ These figures take account of some under-occupancy since experience has shown that it is not possible for all courses to be full at all times.

The Report did not attempt to set out in detail the organisation that was to deliver such a programme, but it did specify some general requirements necessary for the success of the programme. The main administrative principles invoked were co-ordination and delegation. There needed to be co-ordination at both national and local levels, but with the maximum possible delegation of authority to the local levels that was consistent with clear lines of accountability for funds and staff. It was recommended that the programme should be planned annually as a totality, and once the size of the total budget had been decided upon, that funds should be distributed to each local area in proportion to the numbers of young unemployed people in that area. The need for close co-ordination with the Careers and Further Education Services made it desirable that these local areas should be related to Local Education Authority (L.E.A.) areas, though not necessarily on a one-to-one basis. An MSC officer would have to be in charge of each area for reasons of public accountability. In general the programme was likely to require extra staff, both within the MSC and the Careers Service, but it was recommended that this should not involve the creation of a new network of offices or an additional layer of bureaucracy. Success was thought rather to depend upon the capacity of the programme to stimulate local initiatives. Hence, it was suggested that area boards comprising of local representatives of employers, trade unions, local authorities and other interested parties should be given the role of overseeing the planning of provisions for an area. A national board constituted along similar lines was to have a parallel role at the national level. It was also said to be desirable that young people should be able to participate in some way in the running of the programme. This it was thought would help to open up effective channels of communication with the trainees and avert the danger "that the programme could result simply in opportunities that older generations think young people need or ought to have, presented in a way which seems sensible to older people, instead of relevant opportunities which engage the active interest of unemployed young people." (104)

However, it was acknowledged that it was easier to make such a recommendation than to suggest how it might be achieved, though some practical suggestions were put forward. Finally, it was envisaged that the new organisational framework would supercede the networks that had been created to administer JCP and WEP, and go beyond the terms of reference of either of the two existing MSC agencies. But how exactly it might fit into the organisation of the MSC as a whole was not specified.

The final section of the Holland Report considered what were the next steps required for the implementation of the programme. A target date of September 1978 was set for full implementation. It was stressed that the organisation for the expansion required had to be set up as soon as possible, and in particular that the training of staff and supervisors must be got under way. A ministerial decision was asked for by June.

This then was the text of the Holland Report. Now its significance can be interpreted in the wider context of MSC and Government policies. The setting up of the Holland Working Party provided an opportunity for the MSC to reassess the role of special measures in response to unemployment, and youth unemployment in particular, in the context of the philosophy of manpower policy that had been set out in Towards A Comprehensive Manpower Policy. Such a reassessment was clearly overdue. Mukherjee's argument for temporary job creation measures as an extension of active manpower policy had long ago been overwhelmed by the rising tide of unemployment, and, as we have seen, no new argument was put forward to justify such special measures when WEP was launched. Now that the need to establish special measures on a more permanent basis had been recognised, the requirement for a new rationale was more pressing than ever. However, the Working Party was not explicitly asked to provide such a rationale and did not really attempt to do so.

As had been the case with WEP, the argument for the introduction of YOP was made primarily in terms of the shortcomings of existing provision - lack of numbers, lack of permanence, and lack of coherence. The more fundamental questions of why such special

measures should continue to be employed in response to rising youth unemployment, and what might be the implications of continuing to increase their scale and duration, were never seriously considered. Between the elevated 'New Deal' rhetoric of the introduction, and the detailed proposals for the structure of the new programme which followed, this level of analysis was largely omitted. Indeed, the main contribution of the Holland Report was simply to bring together within a single coherent framework a number of schemes that had previously existed in a separate and haphazard fashion. There was little innovation with regard to the content of these schemes, and few explicit statements were made concerning the fundamental aims and objectives of the new programme in which they were to be located.

It will be remembered that the design of YOP started from the two following principles:

- "(a) that the new programme must be designed to meet the personal needs of individual unemployed young people as they seek to secure permanent employment; and
- (b) that the individual elements in the programme and the programme as a whole must not be more financially attractive than being in full-time work or damage the incentive to young people in full-time education to continue their courses". (105)

Of these two principles, the first is rather bland and general, and the second is highly specific. Both require a certain amount of interpretation before they can be understood in relation to the MSC philosophy of manpower policy that was set out in Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy.

The first principle can be interpreted as embracing the dual social and economic function of a comprehensive manpower policy. The social function of the programme as a response to the needs of individual unemployed young people was explicitly emphasised by this principle, and was reiterated elsewhere as the Report went into further detail. The economic side of the dual function was

less obviously present, but may be considered as implicit within the reference to the securing of permanent employment. As was the case with WEP, the objective of improving the 'employability' of unemployed young people was central to the purpose of the programme,⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ and this objective implied not only a response to the needs of young people, but also a response to the needs of employers and the economy as a whole. Indicative of this was the fact that the Working Party commissioned a survey of employers' requirements, as well as one of young people's needs.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

The second of the two founding principles was more specifically an organisational principle. Nevertheless, it can be interpreted in accordance with the general MSC principle of limited direct intervention as, in part, an attempt to minimise the effects of the programme on the labour market. It was stressed throughout the Report that the programme was only designed to operate where the normal mechanisms of the labour market were failing. This, it was assumed on the basis of the predictions that were made, would only be necessary for a limited period of time, and would only apply to the least qualified and most disadvantaged minority of young people. In both these senses, what was proposed was a special programme, and not a permanent or comprehensive programme of work preparation for all young people, although the option was left open for YOP to constitute an element of such a programme in the future.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

Neither of the two founding principles set out in the Holland Report can be interpreted directly in relation to the corporatist element of MSC philosophy that was identified in Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy. However, the corporatist approach to decision-making was expressed practically both in the composition of the Working Party itself, and in the composition of the area and national boards that it proposed should oversee the programme. Closely linked to this consensus-based approach was the MSC's adherence to the principle of voluntarism in its administration of manpower policy. As we have seen, the Commission generally understood

its role as being to enable, rather than to control or compel. With regard to YOP, it should be noted neither the trainees nor the sponsors were to be compelled to take part; rather they were to be offered 'opportunities' to do so.

Thus it is possible to interpret the Holland Report's presentation of YOP in terms of the general principles of manpower policy that were set out by the MSC in Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy, but there still remains a certain ambiguity as to the exact status and position of the programme within the wider framework of manpower policy. The different elements of work preparation and work experience were described, but no assessment was made of their collective status in relation to the concept of training. As we have seen, the dual social and economic function of manpower policy was expressed primarily through the concept of employability. Yet the young people entering the programme were still to be described as 'trainees' and paid an allowance in accordance with this status. Thus, the inconsistency between the status of provision, and the implied status of those being provided for, was imported from the Work Experience Programme and generalised throughout the range of schemes covered by the new YOP structure. It is arguable that there was more justification for considering those on work preparation courses as trainees, but as events turned out the majority of the programme was to consist of work experience, with little or no associated training. Furthermore, the work experience side of the programme was to include, in addition to the schemes of the type that had previously been part of WEP, some that had come from within the framework of JCP. It will be remembered that under JCP it had been seen fit to pay the rate for the job, and that Mukherjee, when proposing such a job creation scheme, had clearly distinguished it from the training function of the MSC.

As was the case with the presentation of WEP, the Holland Report swept over these underlying problems when explaining the form of remuneration that was to be adopted. All the emphasis was put on

why the system should be simple and uniform, and when it came to saying why this uniform system should take the form of an allowance, the question was left begging by this unhelpful non-sequitor:

"Since the opportunities under the programme are either in courses to prepare young people for work or in different forms of work experience an allowance is appropriate".(109)

Some attempt can now be made to bring together into a composite picture the main outlines of the MSC philosophy of YOP as it can be interpreted from the Holland Report. The main purpose of the programme was to provide a minority of young people experiencing serious difficulties in finding employment with a constructive alternative to unemployment that would make them more competitive in the adult labour market. In terms of organisation, it was to involve the collecting together of previous programmes into a more coherent and permanent structure; but it was still to be a 'special' programme, designed to operate only where the normal mechanisms of the labour market were failing and not attempting to take over permanently as a comprehensive programme of preparing and introducing young people to employment. Its style of operation was to be through the involvement of interested parties in a corporatist mode of policy-making, and its participants were to be volunteers. Finally, its status as a training programme remained ambiguous: the MSC never claimed that it was a proper training programme, only that it contained elements of training, yet those taking part were to be considered wholly as trainees, and paid accordingly.

The political context of the commissioning of the Holland Report was provided in the first place by the same uneasy Labour Government/TUC relationship that had been responsible for initiating the special measures approach to youth unemployment in JCP, WEP, and the various other programmes. Before it was stated as an objective in Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy, the aim of ensuring that every

unemployed school leaver should be given the opportunity of receiving some form of training or further education provision had already been recognised in the TUC-Labour Party Liaison Committee statement entitled The Next Three Years and the Problem of Priorities.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ This statement, which was formally approved by the TUC General Council and the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party in July 1976, was regarded as a renewed version of the social contract and played an important part in the securing of a second year's pay policy.⁽¹¹¹⁾

However, separate from the social contract, there was another important source of political pressure which needs to be mentioned in relation to the Holland Report. This was the so-called 'Great Debate' on education, which was officially inaugurated by the Prime Minister, James Callaghan, in a speech delivered at Ruskin College in October 1976.⁽¹¹²⁾ The origins of this debate went back to the previous decade. In the 1960s increased spending on education had been argued for in terms of its being an investment which ultimately would contribute to economic growth and prosperity. With the onset of the economic crises of the mid-seventies, this argument was in effect turned back on itself. Not only had the increased spending on education failed to produce the promised economic benefits, but, it was argued, there had in fact been a decline in educational standards which had contributed to the trend of national economic decline. Thus the perception of crisis was translated from the economy to the educational system. The debate over declining standards in education was originally orchestrated by the Black Paper movement which was highly critical of progressive teaching methods and comprehensive schooling. Supported by certain sections of the media, the authors of the Black Papers were able to elevate the debate into an issue of major public concern. When he became Prime Minister in January 1976, James Callaghan took an immediate interest which led to his personal sponsorship of the official 'Great Debate'. This took the form of a series of eight regional conferences, whose deliberations on a prepared agenda were summarised and published in the July 1977 Green Paper Education in Schools.

In relation to the Holland Report, the first point that needs to be noted is that the inauguration of the Great Debate and the setting up of the Holland Working Party were concurrent events, both taking place in October 1976. Given that they took place alongside each other, it should not be surprising to find that certain themes of the Great Debate had an influence upon the study carried out by the Working Party. The most influential voice in the Great Debate was that of the employers, and the central theme was the need to improve the links between education and industry. Employers generally confirmed the view that educational standards were declining, and complained in particular that schools were not providing young people with the necessary skills and attitudes to function successfully in the world of work. Such opinions made tangible the link between educational and economic decline, and focussed it upon the particular problem of youth unemployment. Thus, the inadequacy of the schools' preparation of young people for the world of work was commonly identified as a major factor responsible for the disproportionately high levels of youth unemployment. These themes of educational decline and inadequate preparation for work were explicitly introduced into the Holland Report by means of the survey of employers. Although no formal conclusions were drawn as to the causes of youth unemployment, implicit within the proposals for the new programme was the view that schools were failing a significant proportion of young people, and that short periods of work preparation and work experience could rectify this deficiency and make these young people competitive within the labour market. Thus, while it was the Government's close but uneasy relationship with the trade unions within the social contract which made it necessary for some new special response to be made to rising youth unemployment, the nature of this response was significantly influenced by the opinions of employers which were expressed in the Great Debate on education.

The publication of the Holland Report in May 1977 was in time for its recommendations to play a role in the annual set of negotiations to secure another year of pay restraint. However, in

the period of nearly a year that had elapsed between commissioning and publication, the social contract had begun to collapse.

A number of factors contributed to this deterioration of relations between the Labour Government and the trade union movement.

Frustration inevitably built up amongst the trade union rank and file as the policy of pay restraint entered its second year, and this was intensified by the fact that now the policy was beginning to have a serious impact on the level of real incomes.⁽¹¹³⁾ But also there was a widespread collapse of confidence in the Government's capacity to honour its side of the social contract bargain, in particular in relation to the control and reduction of unemployment. It has already been seen how in the first year of pay policy, despite all Government promises, unemployment had risen from just over a million to near 1½ million; and how, in order to secure the renewal of the social contract at the end of that year, the Government had promised that it would take action to restore full employment over the next three years. The TUC had accepted this new reassurance and endorsed the continuation of the social contract at its 1976 Congress. But even as it was doing so, a sequence of events was starting that was to mark the beginning of the end of the social contract.

In September 1976 there was another serious sterling crisis, and this time the Labour Government's response was to apply to the International Monetary Fund for a loan. The IMF agreed to grant the British Government the loan that it required, but imposed a set of conditions. In order to make itself eligible the Government had to agree to implement certain economic policies, including further cuts in public expenditure and other deflationary measures.⁽¹¹⁴⁾

The agreement that the Labour Government made in order to secure the IMF loan effectively eliminated its chances of securing another year's formal agreement with the unions on pay. Already at the September 1976 Congress there had been an overwhelming vote

in favour of an orderly return to free collective bargaining at the end of the current stage of pay policy. However, the word 'orderly' had conveyed sufficient ambiguity to give rise to the hope in Government circles that it might be possible to win over trade union leaders to another year of formal restraint. (115) But this depended on some evidence that the Government was serious about adopting policies capable of reducing unemployment. The agreement with the IMF made it obvious that it was impossible for the Government to adopt the alternative policies required, and that it could do no more in the face of 1½ million unemployed than offer continued special measures and wait for an economic upturn. Thus when TUC leaders came to the Government in December 1976, prepared to talk about another year of pay restraint, the Government had nothing left to bargain with. (116)

Nevertheless negotiations continued during the spring and early summer of 1977, (117) and despite the fact that they were largely unsuccessful, the proposals for YOP and Special Programmes can be seen as playing the same role as the proposals for JCP and WEP had done in previous years. Eventually the Government was forced to go ahead unilaterally with Stage 3 of its pay policy, attempting to enforce it by applying sanctions to companies that exceeded the 10% level set for pay settlements. But, despite not agreeing to a formal policy, the TUC released a statement advising union negotiators that the rule enforcing a twelve month gap between wage settlements should still be respected, and that settlements due before July 31st should not be deferred in order to escape the limits of Stage 2. (118) This statement, which was subsequently reproduced as an annex to the Government's White Paper The Attack on Inflation After 31st July 1977 (Cmnd 6882), was first published by the TUC on June 22. A week later Albert Booth, the new Secretary of State for Employment, announced that the Government had instructed the MSC to go ahead with its plans for the Youth Opportunities Programme. (119)

As well as endorsing the programme proposed by the Holland Report, the Secretary of State gave an undertaking that no summer or Easter school leavers who remained unemployed the following Easter would remain without the offer of a place under the programme. Contrary to the majority recommendation of the Report, he stated that a six week waiting period would as a rule be applied. The announcement also disclosed a complementary programme for the adult unemployed, the Special Temporary Employment Programme (S.T.E.P.). This was modelled on, and designed to replace, JCP - the main difference being that it was aimed exclusively at the adult unemployed. Its provisions were to be concentrated in areas of above average unemployment and priority was to be given to the long-term unemployed - those aged 19 to 24 who had been continuously unemployed for more than 6 months and those aged 25 and over who had been continuously unemployed for more than 12 months. The target was to provide places for up to 25,000 people in a full year, in addition to the 8,000 unemployed adults who would be taken on as Supervisors on YOP. Finally, the announcement sealed the fate of the Youth Employment Subsidy, which was to be extended to March 1978, but then discontinued. As with its predecessor, the Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers, there was doubt about the extent to which it was effective in encouraging employers to take on youngsters other than those they would have employed anyway.

Following the ministerial announcement, a discussion document entitled 'The Next Steps' was published in August 1977. It restated the Government's decisions on the two programmes and called upon interested parties to express their views on the organisational and planning framework required for the implementation of such programmes. The decisions on these matters were to be made by the end of December so that the local units of organisation could be made ready for the launch of the programme in April.

When the final details of YOP were unveiled by the MSC in February 1978, a special emphasis was put upon its permanence, and it was stressed that the funding was guaranteed for five years.⁽¹²⁰⁾ The programme to be implemented was in general closely based on the proposals of the Holland Report. The main change with regard to content was that the two schemes, Community Industry and Incentive Training Grants, which were being reviewed separately from the Holland Report but were assumed to be included in YOP, were in fact left out. The organisational framework fitted closely most of the recommendations made. A national Special Programmes Board and 28 Area Boards were set up to oversee the planning and operation of the two programmes, and a Special Programmes Division (S.P.D.) with 31 Area Offices was established within the MSC to carry out the necessary administration.⁽¹²¹⁾ SPD link officers were to be responsible for liaising with potential sponsors in the setting up and monitoring of the various forms of work experience schemes. The parallel responsibility for the work preparation side of the programme was to remain with the TSD, acting on behalf of the SPD. The recruitment of young people into the programme was to be primarily the responsibility of the local Careers Service. Finally, the level of the allowance was set at a flat-rate of £19.50 per week.

These developments and alterations of the original plans for YOP, which took place prior to the programme's launch in April 1978, need also to be interpreted in the wider context of MSC and Government policies. The school leaver undertaking was asked for by the Labour administration, and it was willingly agreed to by the Commission. The reason given by the Minister responsible, John Golding, was that it would ensure that the programme did not neglect those 'rough and tumble' youngsters who were most awkward to cater for.⁽¹²²⁾ While this was certainly a real and valid consideration, it should also be recognised that the school leaver undertaking fulfilled an important political function. At a time when relations with the trade union movement were under great strain and the next General Election was beginning to loom up on the horizon, the undertaking provided a graphic means of publicising

the Government's continued commitment to the unemployed, or at least to the most politically sensitive of their number. In terms of the MSC's philosophy of manpower policy, the undertaking can be regarded as giving an additional emphasis to the social side of what had been described as the dual social and economic function of active manpower policy. Thus it ensured that ultimately the development of the programme was governed by social need registered in terms of the supply of unemployed school leavers, rather than economic demand as calculated by the placement rate of trainees in the labour market. This gave the programme the potential to develop beyond any rationale that might be constructed for it in terms of active manpower policy.

Although contrary to the majority recommendation of the Holland Report, the decision to enforce a 6 week waiting period can be understood in terms of the general principles of MSC policy as a means of limiting the degree of direct intervention in the labour market. Thus it was hoped that this restriction would help to minimise the programme's interference with the normal flow of young people into employment.

Finally, with regard to organisation, the creation of the national Special Programme Board and the local Area Boards confirmed the extension of the MSC's corporatist style of policy-making into the management of the new programmes. Moreover, the decision to establish a separate Special Programmes Division was indicative of the way in which these programmes were to be regarded. On the one hand, it marked a recognition of the fact that special measures had taken on a semi-permanent status; on the other hand, it confirmed that these measures were still 'special' and to be kept separate from the proper training and employment functions of the MSC, as originally conceived. The fact that, within the overall framework administered by the Special Programmes Division, the Training Services Division was still to be responsible for the setting up of the work preparation courses was another expression of the ambiguity concerning the status of YOP as a training programme. (123)

3. Special Measures in Historical Context

It has already been noted that the Holland Report and the launching of YOP marked the culmination of the MSC's special measures approach to the relief of youth unemployment. The new programme was to develop in such a way that it rapidly outgrew its original definition as a 'special programme'. The description of this development, and the analysis of its impact upon the original philosophy of YOP, is to be the subject of the next two chapters. However, before moving on, it is necessary briefly to look back, and to consider the account just given of the modern development of special measures in relation to the history of unemployment and government policy that was presented in Chapter 2.

It will be remembered from that account that the predominant historical role of special measures for the relief of unemployment has been as palliatives, acting against the strict economic logic of macro and micro-economic policies that have failed to secure a full employment equilibrium. In the post-war era prior to the establishment of the MSC in 1974, special measures were said to have been necessary because Keynesian macro-economic policy, latterly supplemented by active manpower policy at the micro level, had by and large succeeded in maintaining full employment. But clearly, at some stage, the commitment of the 1944 White Paper to the maintenance of full employment through a Keynesian macro-economic policy of demand management was abandoned. Exactly when this was, is more difficult to say.

One approach would be to consider the first adoption of special measures as prima facie evidence of the abandonment of an economic policy of full employment. We have seen how originally it was attempted to present the new special measures as an extension of active manpower policy, and thus as an aspect of the micro-economic adjustment of Keynesian macro-economic policy. We have also seen how the rapid rise of unemployment in the mid-seventies destroyed the case that had been put for regarding modern special measures

in this way, and how they became widely recognised as playing the traditional historical role of palliatives only in the specific contemporary political context of the social contract. As the Keynesian economist Lord Vaizey put it, when giving his opinion of measures such as the Job Creation Programme to the House of Commons Expenditure Committee:

"The sum total of these sorts of scheme seems to me to be cosmetic rather than genuine in its economic consequence. What they do in effect is to push employment around a little bit without much net effect. They are in no sense a substitute for the substantial regeneration of British Industry which alone in the long run can give the country the return to full employment".....(124)

It could then be suggested, that once the Government started spending money on special measures to remedy the 'intolerable' level of unemployment, this was in fact a signal that it had decided to tolerate this 'intolerable' level and was trying to make the best of it. There was of course no overt admission from the Labour Government that full employment had been abandoned; as we have seen, the myth of the return to full employment was a necessary element for the maintenance of the social contract.

The above analysis would suggest that the abandonment of the post-war commitment to full employment could be associated with establishment of the MSC, when for the first time since the war plans were formulated for the adoption of special measures as a response to rising unemployment. However, it must also be considered that the trend of rising unemployment can be traced back at least as far as 1966,⁽¹²⁵⁾ and that already, before the MSC had come into existence, the million mark had been exceeded on one occasion. This would suggest that, in fact, the commitment to full employment had been gradually slipping over the decade preceding the formal adoption of a special measures approach by the MSC.

This latter analysis points to another possible association which could be significant. The period during which unemployment first

began to rise, the mid-sixties, is also the period which has been identified with the first emergence of active manpower policy in this country. I have previously described this policy in its own theoretical terms, as a means of micro-economic adjustment operating within the framework of a Keynesian macro-economic policy of full employment. However, the evidence of the trend of rising unemployment since its adoption in the mid-sixties would suggest that it may have been applied more as a substitute than as a means of adjustment.

It will be remembered that the original formulation of active manpower policy emerged from the perceived conflict between the fundamental economic objectives of full employment and stable prices, that was raised by the 1956 White Paper and subsequently given exact mathematical expression in the Phillips Curve. It was thought then that a relatively small reduction in the overall level of demand would stabilise prices and that, with the assistance of an active manpower policy, this reduction in demand could be brought about without a corresponding decline in the level of employment. As it happened, the simple predictable relationship between unemployment and inflation postulated by the Phillip's Curve did not exist, and the choice between the two fundamental objectives could not be avoided merely by the adoption of an active manpower policy. Already, in the 1956 White Paper, the commitment to full employment had been compromised by the equal importance accorded to the fight against inflation. It seems now from the evidence of the rising unemployment figures that, from the mid-sixties onwards, Governments were increasingly prepared to sacrifice the objective of full employment to that of controlling inflation.

In this situation, it is arguable that active manpower policy, rather than functioning as a support to a macro-economic policy of full employment, did in fact, by presenting itself as a partial substitute, assist in the gradual withdrawal from the commitment of Governments to the maintenance of full employment through the management of the overall level of demand in the economy. If this

analysis is accepted, then the role of JCP and other special measures as palliatives does not represent such a major break from the previous role of active manpower policy as might otherwise have been thought. It seems, in fact, that the history of the development of active manpower policy has always been closely associated with the history of the withdrawal from the commitment to full employment and, although it may have played a genuine and positive economic role in relation to employment, at the same time it has always to a certain extent been fulfilling the role of palliative in relation to rising unemployment. In this case, the adoption of a special measures approach by the MSC can be considered as the explicit development of a theme that had already been implicit in the previous history of active manpower policy.

I want now, for the moment, to leave this question of the origins of the withdrawal from the commitment to full employment and its relation to the development of manpower policy. Whenever the withdrawal originally began, and whatever the relation of active manpower policy originally was, I think that it is safe to say that by the time that the Youth Opportunities Programme was launched in 1978 the commitment to full employment was dead. Unemployment had been hovering around the 1.5 million mark for the previous two years, and still the Labour Government had not responded with any significant measures of reflation. Indeed, in its agreement with the IMF, it had made obvious its commitment to further policies of deflation.

In this sense, it could be said that the role of YOP, as a palliative in the absence of a serious Government commitment to the restoration of full employment, was clearer than ever; but for other reasons it was probably not as widely recognised in this role as JCP had been. To begin with, in the objective of enhancing employability, it had inherited from WEP a more plausible real economic function than had existed for JCP; and to this it had added its own particular claims about training content. But also the political situation must be considered.

In the cases of both JCP and WEP, their role as palliatives was clearly connected to the Government's need to maintain the social contract. As we have seen the origins of YOP can be understood in this same context. However, by then, the political situation was less clear. The very fact that it was now obvious that the Government was not prepared to take serious action against unemployment at a macro-economic level was contributing to the destruction of the social contract. The early period of YOP's development was to see both the final collapse of the social contract and the consequent fall of the Labour Government. This was followed by the election of a Conservative Government that was prepared openly to deny any commitment to the maintenance of full employment in its economic policy and that presented itself as totally hostile to the consensus politics that had characterised the previous administration, particularly with regard to its relations with the trade union movement. Thus, the immediate political context in which the role of special measures as palliatives has been understood was already toppling as YOP was being created and, apparently, had completely collapsed within a year of the programme's launch. Yet, YOP not only survived, but outgrew its original plans and transcended its status as a special programme.

The next task is to describe exactly what happened with regard to both the quantitative and qualitative development of YOP throughout its five year history. This will involve: first, a comprehensive national level analysis of the whole of this history; and secondly, a presentation of the conclusions of the local case study which was conducted in the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area. Once it has been established exactly how YOP developed and what it achieved, it will be possible to return to the consideration of its significance within the wider political and economic framework.

Footnotes

1. Hansard, Vol.846 (22 November 1972), Col.1293.
2. See A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., pp.72-74.
3. See 'How to man those fire pumps', The Economist, 3 November 1973, pp.85-86.
4. Ibid., p.86.
5. See for example The Observer(Business), 23 May 1982.
6. See A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., p.80.
7. See MSC, Annual Report 1974-75, p.12.
8. See ibid.
9. See ibid., p.23.
10. Ibid.
11. See Santosh Mukherjee, Making Labour Markets Work, Chapter VII.
12. See Santosh Mukherjee, There's work to be done: Unemployment and manpower policies, London, HMSO, 1974, p.69.
13. See ibid., Chapter 2, 3 and 4.
14. See ibid., Chapters 3 and 6.
15. See ibid., pp.68-70 and p.36.
16. See ibid., p.63.
17. Mukherjee was particularly influenced by the Public Employment Programme in the USA and the Local Initiatives Programme in Canada. See ibid., Chapter 8.
18. See ibid.
19. See ibid., p.55.
20. See ibid., p.56.
21. Ibid., pp.17-18.
22. See ibid., p.65.

23. See Caroline Moorehead, 'Creating jobs for the benefit of the community as well as the unemployed', The Times 3 September 1975, p.12; and Robert Taylor, 'Young and Out of Work', New Society 28 August 1975, pp.462-465.
24. See Santosh Mukherjee's memorandum to the House of Commons Expenditure Committee. Parliamentary Papers (House of Commons and Command) Reports Accounts and Papers 1976-77, Vol. XXVII, London, HMSO, 1977, p.108.
25. See F.F. Ridley, 'The Job Creation Programme: Administrative Problems of Implementation', Public Administration, Vol. 58, Autumn 1980, p.261.
26. See David Coates, Labour in Power?, Longman, London and New York, 1980, p.69.
27. See above, p.94 and footnote 21.
28. These figures are based on the monthly statistics provided by the Department of Employment Gazette.
29. It is interesting to note that, in his submission to the House of Commons Expenditure Committee that investigated JCP in late 1976 and early 1977, Mukherjee continued to advocate a policy of direct job creation. On this occasion, in direct contradiction of his statements in There's Work to be done, he gives the impression that the higher the total of unemployment, the more necessary are special measures to create jobs. There is no mention of an upper limit at which special measures could have a significant impact. The whole argument, in fact, is made from different premises. The main emphasis is now put upon the claim that, in net terms, a place on a job creation programme is on average no more expensive than maintaining someone who is unemployed, and could even involve a saving. This being so, in any situation of unemployment, job creation can be recommended. See House of Commons Expenditure Committee, op.cit., p.123, (para.368).

However, this argument of Mukherjee's does not appear to have been given much credibility, or to have had much effect upon Government policy.

30. Gavin Kennedy, 'Alibi for unemployment?', The Times Educational Supplement, 2 April 1976, p.14.
31. The foundations of the social contract were laid in February 1973 when the TUC-Labour Party Liaison Committee published its Statement on Economic Policy and the Cost of Living.

32. See Glyn and Harrison, op.cit., p.96; D. Coates, op.cit., pp.3-7; and Dennis Barnes and Eileen Reid, Governments and Trade Unions, Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1980, pp.191-195.
33. With trade union agreement, Stage 3 of the Conservative's incomes policy was allowed to run its natural course until the end of July 1974. See, D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.197.
34. This document was entitled Collective Bargaining and the Social Contract.
35. See A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., pp.97-103; and D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., pp.195-200.
36. See D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.201; and A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., p.100.
37. See A. Glyn and H. Harrison, op.cit., pp.103-4.
38. See D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.203.
39. See ibid., p.204.
40. See A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., p.107.
41. See D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.205.
42. Trades Union Congress Report, Brighton 1974, p. 420.
43. See ibid., p.354; and D. Coates, op.cit., p.64.
44. See D. Coates, op.cit., pp.64-66; and D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., pp.204-206.
45. See D. Coates, op.cit., p.65.
46. See ibid., p.63.
47. See D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., pp.202-3; D. Coates, op.cit., pp.32-22; and A. Glyn and J. Harrison op.cit., pp.105-106.
48. See D. Coates, op.cit., p.66.
49. Len Murray, Trades Union Congress Report 1976, p.457.
50. See D. Coates, op.cit., p.68.
51. See D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.203.

52. See D. Coates, op.cit., p.82.
53. Members of the Labour Government repeatedly described unemployment as 'intolerable', while at the same time making clear that it would have to be tolerated. For example, "The Government expects unemployment to continue at a high rate, at any rate in the coming year unemployment will continue to be intolerably high in this country as it is overseas" (The Prime Minister, 1 January 1977). Quoted in the Seventh Report of the House of Commons Expenditure Committee, op.cit., p.XV. See also D. Coates, op.cit., p.68.
54. This target was reached in 1978. See A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., p.117.
55. See D. Coates, op.cit., pp.69-70.
56. See G. Kennedy, op.cit., p.14, and The Economist, 1 January 1977.
57. See John Mackintosh, 'It's a mad, mad world', The Times Educational Supplement, 2 January 1976, p.2. The hostility of the article towards the trade union movement does not invalidate the analysis of the role being played by job creation measures in Government-TUC relations.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid.
60. See the Seventh Report of the House of Commons Expenditure Committee, op.cit., p.xxiii.
61. See F.F. Ridley, op.cit., p.261. Apparently there were only three weeks between the acceptance of JCP as a roughly drawn-up idea and launch of the programme in September 1975.
62. See J. Campling, 'Jobs for new boys', New Society, 3 June 1976, p.528.
63. See Fifth Report from the Committee of Public Accounts, Parliamentary Papers (House of Commons and Command), 1977-78, Vol.XXIX, (para. 38 especially).
64. See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.51, para.17.
65. See Seventh Report from the Expenditure Committee, op.cit., p.xx; and Jo Campling, op.cit.

66. Figures based on monthly statistics provided in the Department of Employment Gazette.
67. See MSC, Young People and Work, (The Holland Report), p.16.
68. See A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., p.117.
69. See ibid., p.119.
70. This commitment was made in the TUC-Labour Party Liaison document entitled The Next Three Years and the Problem of Priorities. See Trades Union Congress Report 1976 (Brighton), p.416ff. (Annex 4); and p.518 for Len Murray's interpretation of the Commitment given.
71. See L.P. Bayly , op.cit., p.2.
72. See Trades Union Congress Report 1976, p.67, (para 42), Youthaids was another leading proponent of the idea of work experience for the young unemployed.
73. See the Seventh Report from the Expenditure Committee, op.cit., pp.xxi-xxiii.
74. See L.P. Bayly, op.cit., p.11.
75. Ibid., p.12.
76. See ibid., p.16.
77. See the Seventh Report from the Expenditure Committee, op.cit., p.xix, (para.36); and Christopher Thomas, 'Creating a master plan to aid workless youth', The Times, 17 March 1977, p.127.
78. See ibid., pp.xxiv-xxv, (paras.60-63)
79. See above p. 107.
80. L.P. Bayly, op.cit., p.6.
81. See ibid.
82. See ibid., p.7.
83. See ibid., p.16ff. An exception, however, was London; see ibid., p.4.
84. See The Times, 7 January 1977, p.2.
85. See MSC, Annual Report 1977-78, para.5.20.

86. See Department of Employment Gazette, March 1978, p.294.
87. See L.P. Bayly, op.cit., p.4.
88. See ibid., p.24.
89. See ibid., p.18.
90. See Department of Employment Gazette, March 1977, p.216.
91. See the Seventh Report of the Expenditure Committee, op.cit., p.xv, (para.15).
92. See MSC, Towards A Comprehensive Manpower Policy, p.22.
93. Geoffrey Holland was the key figure in both the creation and the development of the policy of the Youth Opportunities Programme. After chairing the Working Party, he became the director of the Special Programmes Division which was responsible for the administration of YOP and subsequently director of the Commission itself.
94. MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, p.7.
95. Ibid., p.33, para.3.1.
96. Ibid., para. 3.3.
97. Ibid., p.37, para. 3.42.
98. See ibid., p.47, para.4.40.
99. Ibid., p.43, para.4.5.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid., p.44, para.4.11.
102. See below, p.121. This table is based on Exhibit 5; MSC, op.cit., p.48.
103. This figure included Community Industry, but was exclusive of the various forms of employment subsidy affecting young people.
104. MSC, op.cit., p.46, para.4.35.
105. See above, p.115, footnote 96.
106. See Department of Employment Gazette, August 1978, p.901.

107. See MSC, op.cit., p.6.
108. See ibid., p.33, para.3.4.
109. Ibid., p.40, para.3.62.
110. See Trades Union Congress Report, 1976, p.418.
111. See D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.310.
112. This brief account of the 'Great Debate' is derived from: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Unpopular Education, Hutchinson, 1981, Chapter 10.
113. At this stage prices were continuing to rise rapidly despite wage restraint. See A. Glyn and J. Harrison, op.cit., p.117; and D. Coates, op.cit., pp.72-73.
114. See A. Glyn and H. Harrison, op.cit., pp.112-113; and D. Coates, op.cit., p.39ff.
115. See D. Coates, op.cit., p.73.
116. See ibid.; and D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.211.
117. See D. Coates, op.cit., p.74.
118. See ibid., p.75; and D. Barnes and E. Reid, op.cit., p.212.
119. See Department of Employment Gazette, July 1977, pp.690-1.
120. See ibid., March 1978, pp.276-7.
121. The establishment of 31 Area Offices would appear to go against the advice of the Holland Report against the introduction of a new network of offices (see above p.123. and Young People and Work, p.45, para.4.26). However, the Report does appear to have been ambiguous on this point, and elsewhere refers to the need for a new organisation of local area units (See Young People and Work, pp.50-51, paras.5.4 and 5.8).
122. See The Employment Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Wednesday 5 March 1980, HCP 444-ii 1979-80, paras. 101 and 102.
123. It should be noted here that what was previously referred to as the Training Services Agency is now referred to as the Training Services Division. The establishment of the Special Programmes Division in April 1978 coincided with a more extensive reorganisation of the Commission and its agencies. In order to

strengthen the central co-ordination of operations, the status of separate agencies was removed from the Employment Services Agency and the Training Services Agency, and they became instead merely operating divisions of the MSC, working alongside the newly created Special Programmes Division. Besides these three operating divisions the new structure was to include two support divisions, the Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division, and the Corporate Services Division.

- 124. Seventh Report of the Expenditure Committee 1976-77, op.cit., p.143.
- 125. See above, p. 91.

CHAPTER 4

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF
THE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME:
PART 1 QUANTITY

1. The Growth of Unemployment

In order to understand the development of the Youth Opportunities Programme over its five year history, it is necessary first to describe what happened to unemployment during this period. When YOP was launched in April 1978, the headline figure for the total number unemployed was 1,387,500, which represented 5.9% of the working population. Five years later, when YOP was closed to new entrants, the total stood at 3,053,300 and the unemployment rate was 13.1%. Thus, what in 1978 had already been regarded as an intolerably high level of unemployment, more than doubled during the lifetime of the programme. Moreover, because of changes made in the way that unemployment was counted, these figures understate the rise which actually took place. If the 1983 total had been compiled in the same way as that for 1978, then it would have registered at a level well above 3 million.⁽¹⁾

It will be remembered that the planning process within the Holland Report included a series of predictions of future unemployment levels. These were necessary to gauge the likely level of demand for places on the new programme. Figures 1, 2 and 3 set out these predictions in relation to what actually happened. Although, of course, the principle concern was with youth and school leaver unemployment, the starting point was to predict the future of unemployment amongst the population as a whole. Three separate series of predictions (A, B and C) were made of total unemployment in August of each year between 1977 and 1981. On the basis of these, and using certain stated assumptions, three more series of predictions (again A, B and C) were produced for the quarterly levels of both youth unemployment (16-18 year olds) and school leaver unemployment over the same years.⁽²⁾

Figure 1 shows the Holland Report predictions for total unemployment. It will be noted that each of the predictions assumed that the level of unemployment would reach a peak in the near future, either in 1977 or 1978, and that then there would be some form of recovery which would bring the level down in 1979 and 1980. What in fact happened was that unemployment started in August 1977 at a level of 1.57 million, slightly above any of the three predictions.⁽³⁾ Then over the next two years it fell back down, so that by August 1979, at a level of 1.38 million, it was closely in line with the intermediate of the three predictions. However, contrary to all of the predictions, this recovery did not continue into 1980. Instead, there was a dramatic rise in unemployment between August 1979 and August 1980, which then continued into 1981. By August of that year the level had risen to 2.83 million, compared to the predicted totals of (A) 1.20m., (B) 1.35m., and (C) 0.90m. Thus, by the fourth summer of the programme, the total figure for unemployment was almost double the most pessimistic of the three forecasts in the Holland Report. These predictions ended in 1981, but in reality the unemployment total continued to rise to levels still further beyond anything that could have been expected.

Figures 2 and 3 show the predictions and the reality for youth and school leaver unemployment.⁽⁴⁾ The quarterly figures reveal the annual pattern of fluctuation around the summer school leaving date. However, if the same point on each cycle is compared, it will be seen that the trends from year to year reflect closely those of total unemployment. All three predictions assumed that the summer peaks of both youth unemployment and school leaver unemployment would be coming down between 1978 and 1980. Once again, after starting off roughly in line with these predictions, the point at which reality began to diverge was the summer of 1980. A year later, youth unemployment stood at 34% above the most pessimistic prediction, and school leaver unemployment at 19% above. These figures, at first sight, might not appear to be as dramatic as those for total unemployment. However, it must be pointed out that the predictions did not take any account of future provision for young people. They were predictions of what youth

and school leaver unemployment would be like without YOP.⁽⁵⁾ Thus the reality was that, even with the school leaver undertaking and with YOP then taking on school leavers at a rate of 2 - 300,000 per annum, the figures for school leavers unemployed in the summer of 1981 exceeded by almost 20% the most pessimistic prediction of what would happen without YOP. In short, the growth of youth and school leaver unemployment from 1980 onwards was quite beyond anything imagined when YOP was planned in the Holland Report.

FIGURE 1

TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN GREAT BRITAIN 1977-1983

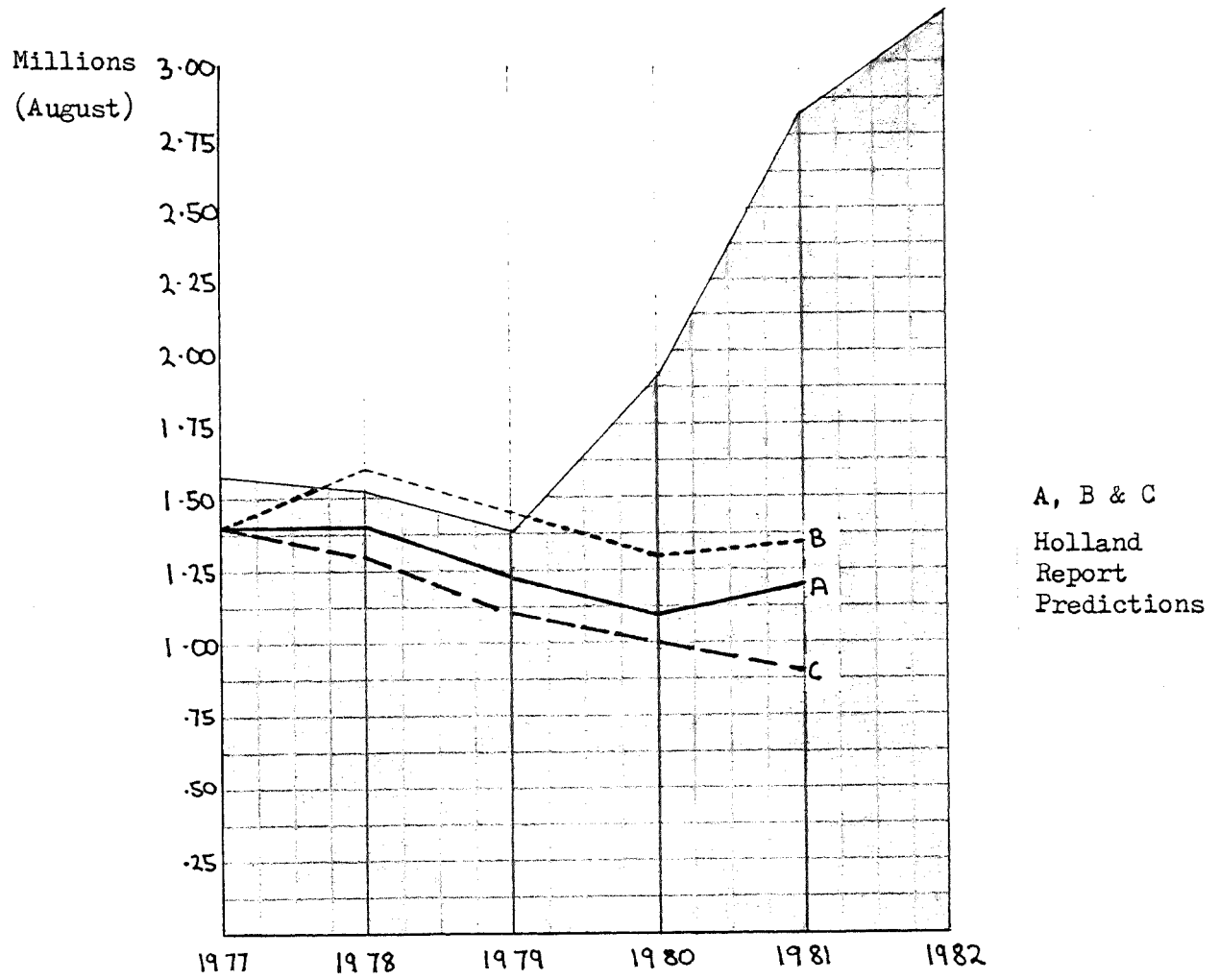
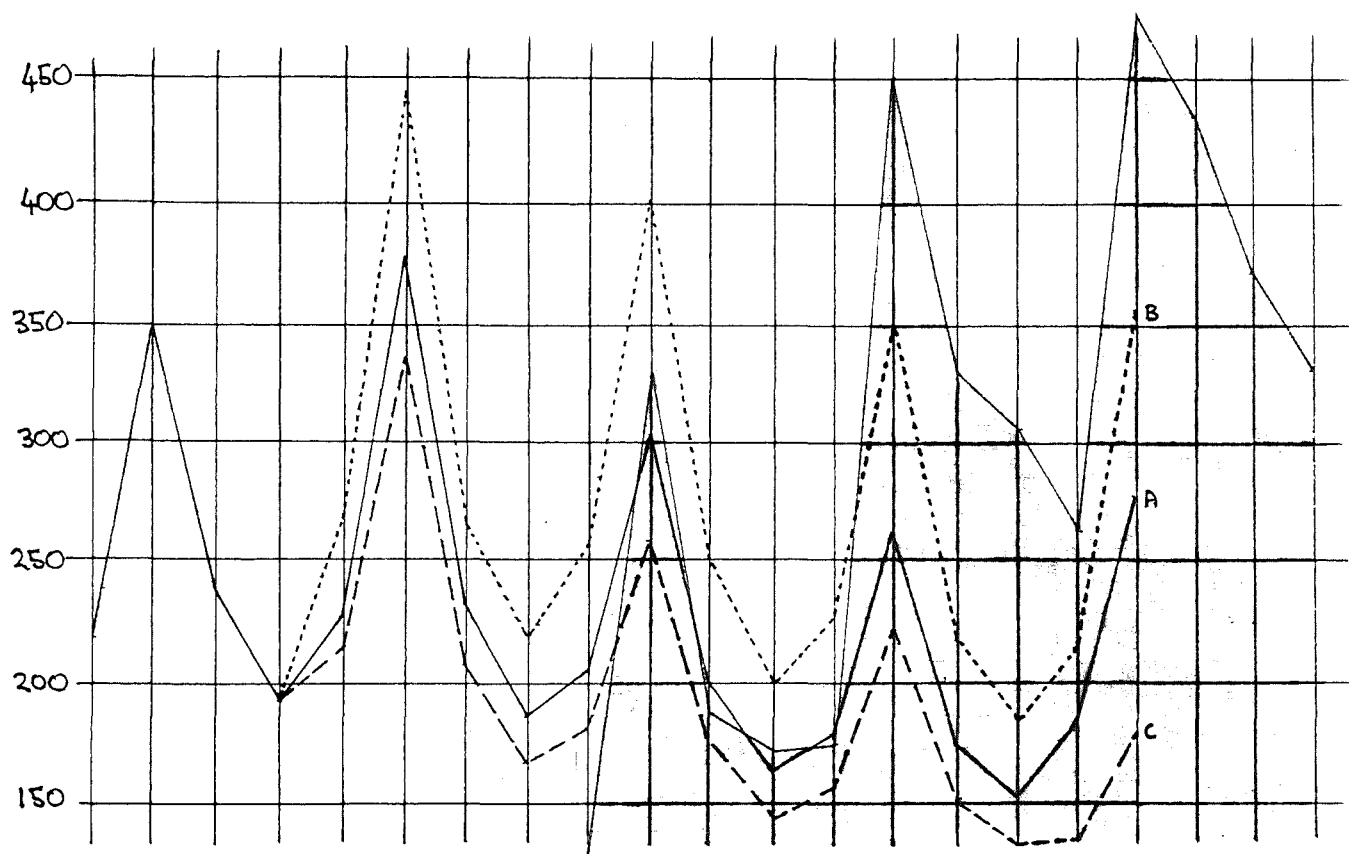
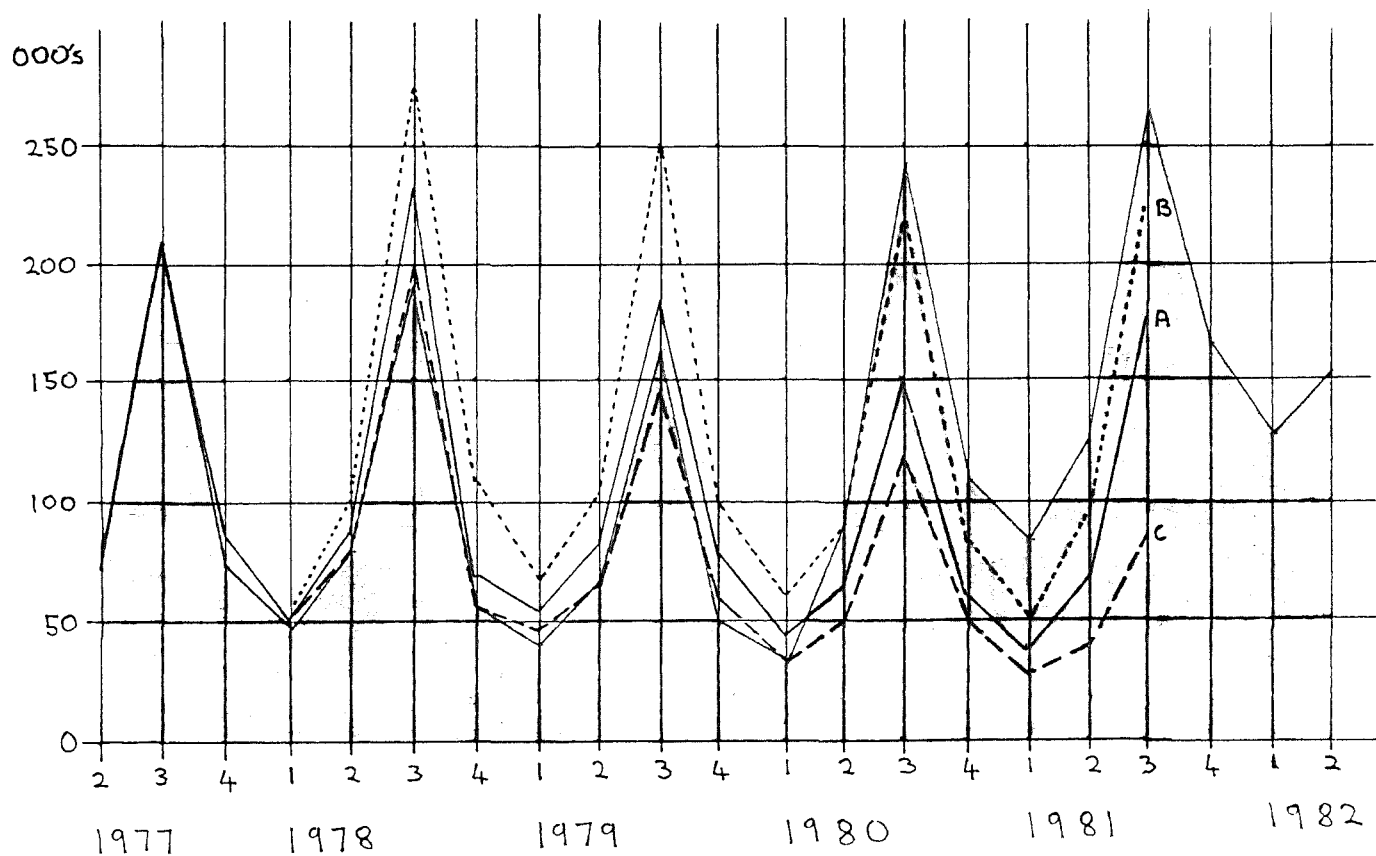


FIGURE 2**UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG 16-18 YEAR OLDS: QUARTERLY 1977-1983**

(A, B & C: Holland Report Predictions)

**FIGURE 3****UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG SCHOOL LEAVERS: QUARTERLY 1977-1983**

(A, B & C: Holland Report Predictions)

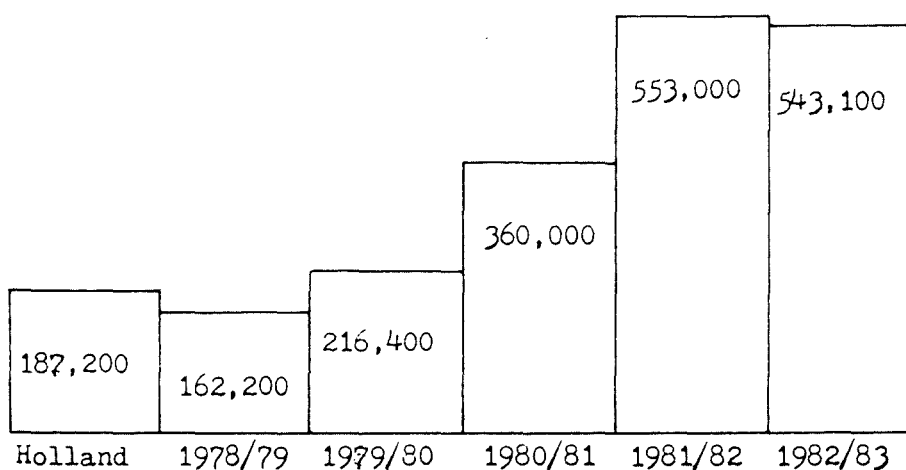


2. The Quantitative Development of YOP

Given the dramatic and unpredicted rise in the levels of unemployment between 1978 and 1983, it is not surprising that the most obvious feature of the development of the Youth Opportunities Programme over this five year period should have been the sheer speed and scale of its quantitative growth. Committed by the school leaver undertaking and other undertakings made subsequently, YOP was forced to provide more and more places each year for the ever-increasing clientele of young unemployed. Figure 4 records the number of entrants to the programme each year in comparison with the original Holland Report plan.⁽⁶⁾ The total given for the latter is 187,200, rather than 234,200 as in Table 1 of Chapter 3, because as we have seen Incentive Training Grants and Community Industry were eventually omitted from the framework of YOP.

It might appear from the fact that the total for 1978/79 is approximately 13% below the Holland Report target that the programme got off to a slow start: however, this was not the case. The Holland Report did not envisage that the programme would become fully operational until September 1978. Thus, although it was launched in April 1978, the first fully operational year of YOP was from September 1978 to September 1979. During this period there were over 200,000 entrants to the new programme, nearly 9% in excess of the Holland Report target.

The first major expansion of the programme came in its third year (1980-81), in response to the take-off of unemployment levels in the summer of 1980. At the beginning of the financial year, the plan was for another gradual rise in the number of entrants to between 250 and 260,000 p.a. As it turned out, a rapid expansion was necessary to meet the undertakings that had been given, and by March 1981 some 360,000 young people had entered the programme. This pattern was repeated in the following year. In November 1980, the target for 1981/82 was set at 440,000 entrants - a 22% increase on the previous year. However, by July 1981, this figure had to be revised sharply upwards again in order to cater for the new flood of unemployed school leavers. By the

FIGURE 4 **ENTRANTS TO YOP****Table 2 :****Expenditure on YOP 1978-79 to 1982-83 (£ million)**

	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83
YOP grants to sponsors, and allowances	56.9	113.5	198.9	374.5	519.9
SPD Salaries	4.0	6.3	9.2	16.2	20.9
Research, premises, staff travel and other overheads	3.6	3.9	5.1	7.1	8.4

1. *Special Programmes Division* salaries and other administration costs include resources devoted to the adult programme (now the Community Programme), operated by SPD staff until June 1982 when it was transferred to MSC's Employment Division.
 2. 1982-83 saw the merger of SPD and TSD into *Training Division*, thus administration costs and staffing numbers for 1982-83 are not strictly comparable to previous years.
- * There is a lag between the growth of YOP and subsequent expenditure by the MSC which prevents direct comparison of the two, by financial year.

end of this fourth year of the programme, there had been 553,000 entrants.

Although in the fifth year of the programme there was a slight drop in the number of entrants, the overall scale of provision continued to increase, with a peak of 308,000 filled places being reached in November 1982 and the average level of filled places throughout the year being significantly higher than in any previous year. This was explained by the fact that the young people were staying for longer periods in the programme - an average of 27 weeks in 1982-83, compared with 23 weeks in 1981-82 and 17 weeks in the first year. The average duration assumed by the Holland Report had been 22 weeks. Thus, by its final year, not only did YOP have almost 3 times as many entrants as originally planned, but these young people were staying the programme on average nearly 25% longer than had originally been assumed. Finally, another way of indicating the phenomenal growth of YOP is in terms of the proportion of each year's school leavers which entered the programme. In the first year it was 1 in 8, in the second year it was 1 in 6, in the third year it was 1 in 3, and in the final two years it was 1 in 2.

The massive expansion of YOP naturally resulted in rising expenditure. Table 2 sets out the costs for each of the five years of the programme.⁽⁷⁾ The original estimate in the Holland Report for the gross costs of the first full year of the programme was £168.31m. (at 1976 prices). However, with the exclusion of Incentive Training Grants and Community Industry, this figure was reduced to £109.78m. Nevertheless, it can be seen that the actual cost for the first financial year of the programme turned out to be much lower, and this despite an increase in the flat-rate weekly allowance from £19.50 to £20.55 in line with increases in social security benefits made in November 1978.

The discrepancy can be accounted for partially by the fact that the programme was not fully operational from the beginning of this first financial year, but still 87% of the estimated throughput

for a full year had been provided at less than 60% of the estimated cost. The main reason for this low level of spending was in fact the much higher proportion of WEEP opportunities than had been planned, these being by far the cheapest form of opportunity, as well as the easiest to set up. In the second year, the more expensive schemes, which had proved slow to get off the ground in the previous year, began to build up larger numbers of places. As a result, costs increased at a considerably faster rate than the number of entrants. Nevertheless, WEEP still remained the predominant element, and despite another November increase in the level of the allowance to £23.50 per week, at the end of the year the programme was once again substantially underspent.⁽⁸⁾

The original MSC projections for expenditure on YOP envisaged a levelling off of the annual costs of the programme once it had been established over the first two years.⁽⁹⁾ However, as we have seen, MSC projections failed to foresee the take-off of unemployment levels in the summer of 1980 and therefore made no allowance for the massive expansion of YOP which was to be necessary over the next two years. Consequently, the first two years of endemic underspending were followed by two years in which budgets were continually exceeded and in need of upward revision. Thus in 1980/81, neither the continued high proportion of WEEP places, nor the freezing of the weekly allowance at £23.50, could stop the costs from rising some 15% above what had originally been budgetted for the year.⁽¹⁰⁾ Likewise in 1981/82, the final figure for spending during the year represented a 17% increase on the original budget, which itself had been more than 50% up on the final figure for the previous year.⁽¹¹⁾ Once again, this huge rise in costs took place despite the cheaper WEEP schemes maintaining their predominant share of the programme, and despite the level of trainees' allowance remaining unchanged at £23.50 for most of the year. Thus it was only in January 1982 that the allowance was raised to £25.00 per week, the level at which it was to be held for the remaining duration of the programme.

Despite the slight decline in the number of entrants, the final year of the programme saw another substantial rise in expenditure. Apart from the increased level of the weekly allowance, this was accounted for first by the general tendency of trainees to stay for longer periods within the programme, and secondly by the introduction of over 80,000 high quality 12 month New Training Places, in preparation for the transition to the Youth Training Scheme. The resultant level of expenditure of £549.2m. represented a five-fold increase on the original Holland Report estimate for a full year of the programme, and more than an eight-fold increase on the actual level of spending in the first financial year. (12)

Finally, two points of qualification need to be made with regard to these expenditure figures. First, it should be noted that the figures given in Table 2 for SPD salaries and other administration costs include resources which were devoted to adult special programmes as well as to YOP. Thus, the actual totals for YOP expenditure were slightly less than the figures quoted, and the proportions attributable to overheads somewhat lower than these figures would indicate. Yet, even without the YOP element distinguished, it can be seen from the figures available that overheads constituted only a small and diminishing proportion of the total expenditure on the programme.

The second qualification which needs to be noted is that all the figures given so far have been for gross costs. They take no account of the savings on the supplementary and unemployment benefits which otherwise would have been paid to the trainees and their supervisors, or of the additional income from taxes (both direct and indirect) and national insurance contributions resulting from the wages and allowances. Taking all these factors into account, it was reckoned that the net costs of the programme to the Exchequer amounted to only about 60% of the figure for gross expenditure in any particular year. (13) Furthermore, YOP qualified for a substantial contribution from the European Social

Fund. For example, the sum granted in 1981/1982 was £59m, which represented approximately a quarter of the net costs of the programme for that financial year.⁽¹⁴⁾ Finally, of course, a comprehensive balance sheet would have to take account of the unquantifiable value of the work done, both to the participants and to the community as a whole.

A third aspect of the development of YOP which needs to be considered is the balance between the various types of scheme that were included within the overarching framework of the programme. Not only did YOP grow in scale and cost far beyond what had originally been anticipated, but also it developed a balance between different kinds of provision which was in many respects unlike that laid out in the Holland Report. Table 3 sets out how the entrants were distributed between scheme types in each of the five years of the programme, and compares these figures with the Holland Report plan.⁽¹⁵⁾

The Holland Report divided the opportunities to be offered under the Youth Opportunities Programme into two major categories, work experience and work preparation. These were presented as being on a par, and it was planned that the entrants should be distributed roughly half-and-half between the two categories. What in fact happened was that in the first year of YOP the various types of work experience scheme accounted for almost 80% of the total number of entrants to the programme. In each of the following three years the figure rose above 80%, and it was only in the final year that it fell back down to 72%. This was the result of the introduction of the major new category of New Training Places, which at the same time caused a reduction in the proportion accounted for by Work Preparation Courses to a meagre 12%. In order to understand better this imbalance between the work experience and work preparation 'halves' of the programme, it is necessary to analyse the development of the individual scheme types on each side.

The outstanding feature on the work experience side, which has already been referred to in relation to the costs of the programme, was the unanticipated scale of the Work Experience on Employer's

TABLE 3 YOP ENTRANTS BY SCHEME TYPE

	HOLLAND		1978/79		1979/80		1980/81		1981/82		1982/83	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
WORK EXPERIENCE	100,000	53%	128,200	79%	182,100	84%	304,500	85%	461,500	83%	393,400	72%
Work Experience on Employers' Premises	60,000	32%	108,400	67%	138,900	64%	242,200	67%	371,200	67%	309,400	57%
Project Based Work Experience	15,000	8%	8,400	5%	15,200	7%	20,100	6%	74,100	13%	68,300	13%
Community Service	15,000	8%	7,600	5%	20,700	10%	30,200	8.5%				
Training Workshops	10,000	5%	3,800	2%	7,300	3%	12,000	3.5%	16,200	3%	15,700	3%
WORK PREPARATION COURSES	87,200	47%	34,000	21%	34,300	16%	55,500	15%	91,500	17%	67,800	12%
Employment Induction Courses	60,000	32%	2,400	1.5%	3,000	1%	4,100	1%	3,700	0.5%		
Short Industrial Courses/ Short Training Courses	25,000	13%	30,900	19%	29,300	14%	49,300	13.5%	85,800	16%		
Remedial or Preparatory Courses	2,200	1%	700	0.5%	2,000	1%	2,100	0.5%	2,000	0.5%		
NEW TRAINING PLACES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,900	15%
TOTAL	187,200	100%	162,200	87%	216,400	116%	360,000	192%	553,000	295%	543,100	290%

Premises element. The Holland Report had planned for WEEP schemes to cater for 32% of entrants. As it turned out, two out of every three young people in the first year of the programme entered WEEP schemes. Originally, this was thought to be a temporary aberration, resulting from the large carry-over of ready-formed places from the Work Experience Programme and the comparatively longer time that it took to set up places in the other elements of YOP.⁽¹⁶⁾ However, despite efforts to build up these other elements in the second year of the programme, WEEP still retained a 64% share of the total throughput. In the following two years, the pressure to create greatly increased numbers of opportunities at a rapid pace and with minimum additional expenditure ensured that the proportion of WEEP entrants went back up to 67%. It was only in the final year, with the introduction of the New Training Places, that the figure came down to 57%.

The Holland Report envisaged that the three other types of work experience scheme - Project Based Work Experience, Community Service and Training Workshops - would between them constitute 21% of the new programme. As it happened, they accounted for only 12% of the entrants in the first year. After this slow start, more places began to come 'on stream' in the second year, and the percentage envisaged in the Holland Report was nearly achieved. However in the following two years, as the capacity of the programme expanded rapidly, the proportions dropped back to around 16% and then remained stable at that level with the introduction of the New Training Places in the final year. One other minor point to be noted is that at the beginning of the fourth year of the programme the two separate scheme types, Project Based Work Experience and Community Service, were merged together under the collective title of Community Projects. They had already been running closely in tandem on the ground, so this change merely formalised what was already taking place.⁽¹⁷⁾

On the work preparation side, the shortfall in comparison with the Holland Report plan was accounted for wholly by the almost complete failure of one particular kind of opportunity, Employment

Induction Courses. The Holland Report envisaged that these two week courses would account for almost a third of the total number of entrants to the programme. Yet, in the first year they catered for only 1½% of the intake, and thereafter the figure remained at roughly 1% for the rest of the programme. Little was said publicly about the failure of Employment Induction Courses, but there appears to have been little enthusiasm for them amongst either sponsors or trainees. A small number of similar courses already existed before YOP at Skillcentres and colleges, and the hope was expressed in the Holland Report that a substantial expansion could be brought about through the involvement of private industry.⁽¹⁸⁾ However, the rapid turnover of these courses meant that they were troublesome to organise, and there was little motivation for private employers to do the hard work of induction without them necessarily being able to reap the benefits of the trainees' labour.⁽¹⁹⁾ On the part of the trainees, most wanted to get started in a particular area of work as soon as possible and therefore were reluctant to go through this preliminary stage. However, it is true to say that some might have benefitted from the opportunity to pause and assess more carefully the kind of work that they wanted to do.

The effect which the failure of Employment Induction Courses had on the overall balance of YOP should not be over-estimated. Although it was intended that they should constitute a third of the annual throughput of the programme, because the courses were only two weeks long, this required only 3,000 places at any one time, which was less than 4% of the total number planned for the programme as a whole. Moreover, the role which the courses were to have played (often as a preliminary to entry into work experience schemes) could in most respects be fulfilled by the induction processes which were included as an integral element of all work experience schemes. The main effect of failure of EICs was upon the appearance of the programme. The large annual throughput which was intended for these courses made it possible for the Holland Report plan to be presented as an equal combination of both work experience and work preparation opportunities. This was an important factor when it came to securing support for the plan from the wide range of interests that were to be involved in its implementation.⁽²⁰⁾ However, once the length of the individual schemes and courses is taken into account, it can be seen that the

work preparation side was always intended to be subsidiary. Indeed, in terms of places rather than throughput, it represented only 15% of the programme content within the Holland Report plan. Thus, the failure of EICs, which with 3,000 places were to have accounted for the majority of the throughput on the work preparation side, in a sense merely drew attention to the reality of the situation.

The other two kinds of work preparation course, Short Industrial Courses and Remedial or Preparatory Courses, both constituted approximately the proportion of the total programme which had originally been intended. Short Industrial Courses, which were subsequently renamed as Short Training Courses, already existed in quite large numbers before YOP. Thus, in the first year, when other schemes were still building up their numbers, these courses constituted 19% of the total throughput compared with the Holland target of 13%. Thereafter, they maintained a proportion of the total throughput which was marginally above this target figure until the introduction of the New Training Places in the final year. Remedial or Preparatory Courses were only intended to constitute roughly 1% of total throughput. After a slow start, they reached this level in the second year of the programme. Despite the rapid expansion of total throughput, their numbers remained static in the following year, and consequently their proportion was reduced to less than $\frac{1}{2}\%$. However, it should be taken into account that as the programme expanded to cater for more of each year's school leaver population, the proportion that were in need of remedial help was reduced. One further point which should be noted about this area of provision is the introduction of a new form of remedial course which was not mentioned in the Holland Report. This was the Work Introduction Course (W.I.C.), which consisted of 13 weeks training in basic work skills and wider skills needed in working life. These courses took place in further education colleges, and were aimed at young people with no educational qualifications, including those classified at school as mentally handicapped. Introduced in the first year of YOP, WICs came to make a substantial contribution to the MSC's provisions in the remedial field, alongside the Young Person's Work Preparation Courses that were provided by the Employment Rehabilitation Centres.

Looking now at the development of the overall balance of the programme over its first four years, what can be seen is that it was the schemes which were easiest and cheapest to provide which came to predominate. Work Experience on Employers' Premises was favoured on both counts. During the first two years, when the programme underspent its budget, the crucial factor was ease rather than cheapness. Thus, in the first year it was the schemes which pre-dated YOP, or which could be got off the ground quickly, that tended to come to the fore. The comparative respite of the second year allowed for some redress of the balance in favour of the schemes which took more time and effort to set up. Then in the third and fourth years, as the programme expanded rapidly and exceeded its budgets, expense became a crucial factor. Table 4 sets out the comparative gross unit costs of the different types of schemes during the second half of the fourth year of the programme.⁽²¹⁾ If these figures are put against those for throughput in the same year, and then the two together compared with the original Holland Report targets, it will be seen how important a factor expense was in shaping the development of the balance of the programme. WEEP, of course, stands out as being far less expensive than any other type of scheme. The only cost, apart from SPD overheads which were generalised across the whole programme, was the trainees' allowance. If WEEP had constituted only a third of total throughput as planned in the Holland Report, and the distribution between the other schemes had remained the same, then the overall cost of the fourth year of the programme would have been raised by nearly 40%.

The final year of YOP saw a decisive change in the development of the balance of the programme. An increase in expenditure of almost 40%, combined with a slight decline in throughput, lifted the major constraints which had shaped the programme during the two previous years. Some of this extra finance was accounted for by the general tendency of trainees to stay for longer periods on the programme, but the most important factor was the introduction of the New Training Places. They marked a move away from the

TABLE 4 **GROSS UNIT COSTS OF SPECIAL PROGRAMMES**

	Cost per week*	Average cost per entrant	Average duration
	(£)	(£)	(weeks)
Youth Opportunities Programme	40.50	931	23
Work Experience on Employers' Premises	23.50**	520	22
Community Projects	59.50	1,902	32
Training Workshops	67.00	2,216	33
Employment Induction Courses	74.00	148	2
Courses organised by Training Services Division	83.00	1,080	13
Courses at Employment Rehabilitation Centres	123.00	1,232	10
Community Enterprise Programme	91.00	2,730	30
*These figures exclude MSC overhead costs and relate to the second half of 1981/82.			
**£25.00 from January 1982.			
Source: SPD			

determining factors of ease and cheapness, towards the pursuit of quality in preparation for the new Youth Training Scheme.

New Training Places (N.T.P.s) were designed to provide trainees with 12 months of integrated, high quality training and work experience. They could take a number of different forms, each being based on a development of existing YOP schemes. The four basic categories were : (1) Work Skills Courses; (2) Information Technology Centres; (3) High Quality Community Projects and Training Workshops; and (4) Linked Schemes. Work Skills Courses (W.S.C.s) consisted of an integrated combination of a 6 month training course and a 6 month work experience placement. They could be based either with an employer or with a college/training establishment. Information Technology Centres (I.T.E.C.s) were the result of a joint initiative undertaken by the MSC and the Department of Industry. Developed originally on the basis of a Training Workshop, they provided an integrated programme of work experience and training specifically in the area of new technology. High Quality Community Projects and Training Workshops were simply existing YOP schemes in these categories which had been extended and upgraded to contain all the key elements demanded of New Training Places. Finally, Linked Schemes were existing or new work preparation courses and work experience schemes, which remained under the separate control of different sponsors, but which were linked up to provide the extra scope required of New Training Places.

All of these different forms of New Training Places had to be able to offer trainees the following seven key elements of content: (1) induction; (2) assessment; (3) basic skills (e.g. numeracy, literacy, communication, coping and managing, practical skills, social and caring skills, and technical skills); (4) occupationally relevant education and training; (5) guidance and support; (6) a record and review of progress; and (7) certification.

It will be noted that some of these elements of content were already required for existing YOP schemes. Others were the product of good practice which had gradually developed over the previous four years. However, in the case of New Training Places, all of these key elements were required, and the specifications were made more demanding and more detailed than they had been before. (22)

The target set for the final year of YOP was 100,000 NTPs. Although in fact only just over 80,000 entrants were recorded during the financial year, the target figure for places was reached by 1983. (23) Thus, while in terms of entrants NTPs represented only 15% of the total annual throughput, by the end of this final year they constituted roughly a third of the total number of places available. Apparently, an important change had taken place in the overall balance of the programme.

3. Criteria for the Measurement of YOP's Performance

We have now seen how, under the pressure of unemployment levels far beyond anything foreseen in the Holland Report, the development of the Youth Opportunities Programme overran its original plans in terms of scale, costs, and the balance of provision. But how did this development relate to the programme's fulfilment of its original objectives? The next stage is to make a systematic examination of the performance of YOP over its five year history in relation to the following three criteria: (1) the undertakings; (2) the employability of the trainees; and (3) the quality of content. The choice of each of these criteria requires a brief explanation.

The Holland Report, it will be remembered, made no reference to any undertakings. Nevertheless, when Geoffrey Holland as Director of the MSC subsequently reviewed the history of YOP, he referred to the school leaver undertaking as "the key feature of the programme".⁽²⁴⁾ Alongside the other undertakings, it provided a touchstone against which the public were invited to judge the annual performance of YOP. Furthermore, it ensured that the development of the programme was tied to the rising levels of unemployment. However, the success of the programme could not be judged purely in terms of its ability to accommodate ever-increasing numbers of unemployed young people. Success also depended upon what happened to these young people when they came back out onto the labour market at the end of their schemes and courses. The main rationale for the programme, as expounded in the Holland Report, was to improve the trainees' chances of securing permanent employment. Thus, a second important criterion for the assessment of the performance of YOP was the employment placement rate of the trainees when they left the programme. Yet, this placement rate was heavily dependent upon factors which were beyond the control of those who were directly responsible for the programme; in particular, it was subject to the general deterioration of

labour market prospects under the influence of a deflationary macro-economic policy. Consequently, the performance of the programme cannot be assessed purely in terms of either the quantity of entrants or the percentage of employment placements. It is necessary also to attempt to make an assessment of the intrinsic quality of the provision.

The assessment of the qualitative performance of YOP is not as straightforward as the assessment of the undertakings or the employability of the trainees. Quality could only be directly apprehended at the level of the individual scheme or course, where it could be described and analysed in detail. In order to be measured at a national level of analysis, it needed first to be interpreted in terms of a small number of simple quantitative gauges. The Holland Report established certain minimum requirements of content which, during the first year of the programme, were elaborated upon in order to produce a series of principles and guidelines for quality improvement. Amongst these, it is possible to identify three crucial aspects of quality improvement which can be used as quantitative gauges of the programme's qualitative performance. In addition, a fourth gauge is provided by what can be regarded as the reverse side of quality improvement, the measurement of the various abuses to which the programme was subject. However, the qualitative performance of YOP cannot be assessed simply in terms of these four gauges. The understanding of quality and quality improvement did not remain static, but developed throughout the duration of the programme in response to research and practical experience. This development affected not only specific qualitative objectives, but, in combination with the quantitative development which has been described above, it affected the whole qualitative status of the programme. Given the complexity of this subject and the importance of its implications, a separate chapter will be required for the analysis of YOP's qualitative performance and development. But first it is necessary to make the assessments of the programme's performance in relation to the more straightforward quantitative criteria provided by the inputs and outputs of trainees.

4. The Undertakings

In each of the five years of the existence of the Youth Opportunities Programme, undertakings were given to the effect that certain groups of unemployed young people would receive the offer of a place on the programme by a certain date. Successive Labour and Conservative Secretaries of State invited the public to judge the performance of the programme in terms of the targets set by these annual promises. The purpose of this section is to take up this invitation and provide a systematic analysis of YOP's performance in relation to the undertakings that were made on its behalf.

On the question of the availability of places on YOP, the Holland Report simply stated that, "the opportunities provided by the new programme ... should be available to all unemployed young people."⁽²⁵⁾ As has been noted, the idea that a specific guarantee should be made to a particular group of unemployed young people only emerged when the plans for the programme were announced by Albert Booth in the House of Commons. He introduced the idea in the following terms :

"We shall want to ensure that places go to those who most need them. Summer school leavers will be considered for places from September, and it is our firm intention that no summer or Easter school leavers who remain unemployed the following Easter should remain without the offer of a place under the programme. The Government will ensure that the necessary resources are available for this purpose, and the MSC will arrange the programme accordingly, making such special provision as is necessary."⁽²⁶⁾

This 'firm intention' subsequently became established as the annual school leavers undertaking, and was repeated in each year of the programme's existence. During the first three years, it was an Easter undertaking; in the latter two years, the date by which an offer of a place was to be made was brought forward to Christmas.

In the first year of YOP, the school leavers undertaking was the only undertaking given, and throughout the existence of the programme, it remained the most prominent of the undertakings. In each of the four other years, a second undertaking was given to another specific group of unemployed young people. In the second and third years of the programme, the target group was the long-term young unemployed. The promise originally made was that any young person under the age of nineteen becoming unemployed for 12 months would be ensured the offer of a suitable place on the programme within 3 months.⁽²⁷⁾ This undertaking started in January 1980, and continued to run on an on-going basis until the end of the third year of the programme. It was then replaced by a new undertaking: that all other 16 and 17 year olds (i.e. those not already covered by the school leavers undertaking) who had been unemployed for 3 months would be offered a suitable place within another 3 months.⁽²⁸⁾ This commitment applied on an on-going basis throughout the latter two years of the programme.

Table 5 sets out the national results of the school leaver undertaking in each of the five years of the programme.⁽²⁹⁾ Column 3 records the numbers of unemployed school leavers to whom the MSC failed to deliver its promise of an offer of a place by the specified date. The worst result it will be noted was in Year 4, the first year of the Christmas undertaking. Over 15,000 school leavers were left without the offer of a place which they had been promised.⁽³⁰⁾ However, such figures need to be understood in the context of the rapidly increasing number of young people being covered by the undertaking. Column 1 records the annual number of school leavers successfully placed on the programme by the undertaking date. If these figures are added to those in Column 3, then the totals represent the overall number of young people covered by the undertaking each year. The failures in Column 3 can then be rendered as a percentage of the total numbers covered by each year's undertaking. This annual 'failure rate' is recorded in Column 3a. Year 4 still emerges as the worst result, but, even with 15,000 young people left without the offer of a place, the failure rate was less than 5%.

TABLE 5 THE RESULTS OF THE SCHOOL LEAVER UNDERTAKING

	1	2	2A	3	3A	4	5	5A
	No. of school leaver entries by given date	No. of s/l.s. left on regis- ter at given date	2 as % of 1 + 2	No. in 2 who refused	3 as % of 1 + 2	No. in 2 who were inappr- opriate	No. in 2 who were still to be made an offer	5 as % of 1 + 5
EASTER	*****	*****	**	*****	**	*****	*****	**
YEAR 1 78/79	114,000	6,201	5.2	3,300	2.7	900	1,632	1.4
YEAR 2 79/80	131,000	5,423	4.0	3,300	2.4	1,032	465	0.4
YEAR 3 80/81	234,000	22,004	8.6	(3+4= 11,133)			8,141	3.4
CHRISTMAS	*****	*****	**	*****	**	*****	*****	**
YEAR 4 81/82	295,000						15,010	4.8
YEAR 5 82/83		55,991		29,905		12,154	10,565	

This supports the MSC's claim that in each year of the programme the school leaver undertaking was 'substantially fulfilled'. (31)

However, this conclusion must be qualified by reference to the figures in Column 2 of Table 5. Column 2 records the annual number of unemployed school leavers who did not take up a place on the programme by the date of the undertaking. These figures include the numbers of young people who had not been made an offer of a place, as recorded in Column 3, but they are considerably larger because they also include a number of other categories which have not yet been referred to. The two most important categories are those to whom the offer of a place was deemed inappropriate, and those who refused an offer of a place. There were a number of reasons why it might have been considered inappropriate to offer a young person a place on the programme: for example, they might have been waiting to take up an offer of full-time employment or to enter college, they might have been pregnant, they might have been ill, or they might have been pursuing a course of part-time study. Neither was the classification of a refusal a straightforward matter. Widely differing definitions of what constituted a refusal prevailed amongst the different Careers Services. However, what is clear from the figures given in Column 2 is that over the five years of the programme there was a steady rise in both the numbers and percentages of young people covered by the undertaking who, for whatever reason, did not take up a place by the specified date. Underlying this trend, perhaps the most significant factor was the increase in the rate of refusals. In the second year of the programme, 3,300 young people covered by the undertaking were classified as refusers, representing 2.4% of the total. By the final year of the programme the number had risen to almost 30,000, representing 8.0% of those covered by the undertaking. Thus, the number of young people refusing to take up an offer of a place on the programme became far more significant than the number to whom the MSC failed to make such an offer.

Another way of considering the impact of this undertaking is to attempt to assess its impact upon the school leaver unemployment

statistics. These have already been set out in Figure 3, above. It will be remembered that, despite the existence of the school leaver undertaking, by the summer of 1980 the level of unemployment amongst school leavers under 18 had risen higher than the most pessimistic prediction in the Holland Report of what the level would be without the intervention of the Youth Opportunities Programme. Given that the school leaver undertaking was 'substantially fulfilled' each year, this situation may appear somewhat paradoxical. However, it needs to be taken into account that the undertaking only applied to school leavers of the current year; whereas, in the unemployment statistics, all young people who had not been employed since leaving school or college were classified as 'school leavers'. Thus, for example, a young person might leave school with no job to go to, be taken off the unemployment register and onto YOP in accordance with the school leaver undertaking, spend 6 months on a scheme, and then go back onto the unemployment register, still classified as a school leaver. Yet, taking this factor into account, it must still be considered remarkable that the totals of school leavers under 18 unemployed continued to rise despite the growing proportion of current year school leavers being taken off the register for 6 months or more. In effect, there were more school leavers unemployed in the 18 months between leaving YOP and reaching the age of 18, than previously there had been in the 2 years between the minimum school leaving age and the 18th birthday. Moreover, the 6 months on YOP was supposed to be enhancing the employability of school leavers - more will be said about this later. Of course, it must be taken into account that this continued rise in school leaver unemployment took place against the background of a massive rise in the total level of unemployment, which exceeded the Holland Report predictions by a considerably larger percentage than was the case with the school leaver figures. Perhaps then a more significant set of statistics for gauging the impact of the undertaking would be those showing the growth of school leaver unemployment

in relation to total unemployment. Table 6 sets out the annual averages for school leaver unemployment as a percentage of total unemployment between 1971 and 1982.⁽³²⁾ From this it can be seen that, although the school leaver undertaking failed to halt the absolute rise of school leaver unemployment, it did halt the rise as a proportion of the total unemployment. Whereas school leaver unemployment had grown steadily as a proportion of total unemployment from 1971 to 1977 (with the exception of 1973 which was accounted for by the raising of the school leaving age), over the next five years it fell from 7.0% in 1977 to 6.1% in 1982, though the 7.0% high point was reached again in 1980. Thus, it can be stated as an achievement of the school leaver undertaking that it succeeded in halting the tendency which went back at least to the beginning of the 1970s for school leaver unemployment to increase at a more rapid rate than total unemployment. However, it only did so by in effect delaying the school leaving date by roughly 6 months for as many as half of each year's minimum age school leavers.

Turning now to the second undertaking given under the Youth Opportunities Programme, that to the long-term young unemployed, it will be noted that the results presented in Table 7 are far from complete. Whereas the MSC was always keen to publicise its achievements in relation to the annual school leavers undertaking, it tended to be more reticent about the results of its other undertakings. Thus, with the undertaking to the long-term unemployed it has only been possible to obtain results for two of the five quarters during which it was in operation.

The first set of results available for the long-term young unemployed undertaking are those for the first quarter in which it applied, January to April 1980. These were published, alongside the results of the school leaver undertaking, in the Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes.⁽³³⁾ The Review claimed that

TABLE 6 SCHOOL LEAVER UNEMPLOYMENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT
IN GREAT BRITAIN - ANNUAL AVERAGES 1971-1982

Year	Total	School Leavers	%
1971	758,400	14,800	2.0
1972	844,100	19,100	2.3
1973	597,900	7,000	1.2
1974	599,700	13,700	2.3
1975	935,600	45,300	4.8
1976	1,304,600	81,600	6.3
1977	1,422,700	99,800	7.0
1978	1,409,700	93,700	6.6
1979	1,325,500	78,000	5.9
1980	1,715,900	120,100	7.0
1981	2,628,400	159,600	6.1
1982	3,036,600	184,700	6.1

TABLE 7 THE RESULTS OF THE UNDERTAKING TO LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED
YOUNG PEOPLE

	1	2	2A	3	3A	4	5	5A
	Under 19s unem- ployed 52 wks+ at 1st date	No. from 1 left on regis- ter 3 months later	2 as % of 1	No. in 2 who refused	3 as % of 1	No. in 2 who were inappr- opriate	No. in 2 who were still to be made an offer	5 as % of 1
JAN-APR '80	5,614	2,635	47	1,365	24	607	663	12
APR-JUL '80								
JUL-OCT '80	6,648	3,885	58	1,715	26	185	1,985	30
OCT80-JAN81								
JAN-APR '81								

undertakings were 'very largely met'. Of the 5,614 in the long-term undertaking group at the specified date in January, 663 remained unemployed and without an offer of a place on the programme three months later. This was not much larger than the number left without the offer of a place under the school leaver undertaking, but as a percentage of the original target group it represented approximately a 12% failure rate, compared with the 0.4% failure rate of the school leaver undertaking. Furthermore, as Column 2 reveals, nearly half of those covered by the undertaking remained on the unemployment register at the end of the specified period. What in particular should be noted is the high rate of refusals: almost a quarter of those in the original target group refused the offer of a place on YOP. In addition to these, some must have reached their 19th birthday. Unfortunately, no figure was given for the number in the undertaking group who were actually provided with a place on YOP during the three month period.⁽³⁴⁾ Without this figure, it is difficult to gauge the achievement of the undertaking, since the failure rate is understated in comparison to that of the school leaver undertaking. However, it can be said with certainty that the first three months of the undertaking to the long-term young unemployed had a failure rate of more than double the worst year of the school leaver undertaking.

The other set of results given for the long-term young unemployed undertaking by Table 7 are those for the quarter July to October 1980. These were obtained from an internal paper presented to the Special Programmes Board. They reveal a 30% failure rate in terms of those left without an offer of a place on the programme. The refusal rate remained at about 25%, and almost 60% of those covered by the undertaking were still on the unemployment register at the end of the three months. Once again it was impossible to tell the exact number that YOP was responsible for taking off the register.⁽³⁵⁾ However, even if it took all those

who left the register during this period, its performance in relation to the undertaking must still be regarded as very unsatisfactory. Perhaps this is why these results were never published.

By the time that the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes was published in December 1981, there should have been available four such sets of results covering the period April 1980 to April 1981. However unlike in the previous year's Review, no clear statement was given of the results of the undertaking to the long-term young unemployed. All that was said is as follows:

"Long term unemployment as a proportion of overall unemployment among 16 to 18 year olds fell from 5.3% in January 1979 (9,300 young people) to 3.3% in January 1980 (5,700) and 3.1% in January 1981 (9,400). This was due to efforts to ensure young people - including school leavers under the Easter undertaking - entered YOP well before they had spent a year on the unemployment register. In addition, the safety net of the separate undertaking to young people unemployed for 12 months meant that 8,000 long term unemployed young people had a place on the Programme." (36)

As a statement of the results of a publicly given undertaking, this is not only inadequate, it is misleading. The reduction of long-term unemployment as a proportion of overall unemployment among 16 to 18 year olds was not due to the impact of YOP under either of the undertakings, but was the result of the sharp rise in the overall total of youth unemployment that took place during 1980, from 170,000 in January 1980 to 305,000 in January 1981. Moreover, the primary effect of the school leavers undertaking upon this proportion would be to increase it, by reducing the numbers of those unemployed for less than a year. The significant figures are those in brackets, and the proportions given in the main text are merely a contrived way of distracting attention from the fact that, despite both undertakings, the number of young people unemployed for a year or more rose from 5,700 in January 1980 to 9,400 in January 1981.

At this point it is worth taking a look at how the equivalent statistics gauging the impact of the long-term unemployed undertaking were reported in the previous year's Review. The progress made over the year was described as follows:

"The number of young people under 19 unemployed for over 12 months fell significantly during the latter part of 1979 and the early part of 1980 - from 9,000 in July to 5,600 in January 1980 and 2,600 in April 1980. This is very largely due to the impact of the long-term unemployed undertaking
....."(37)

If these figures are linked up with those given in the Review of the Third Year, it becomes apparent that in 1980/81 there was a rapid reversal of all the progress made in the previous year. The Review of the Second Year claims that by April 1980 the number of young people unemployed for over 12 months had been reduced to 2,600. The Review of the Third Year admits (at least in brackets), that by January 1981 the number of young people in this category had reached 9,400. However, the full period covered by this Review was from April 1980 to April 1981. No figure is provided for April 1981, but according to the Employment Gazette the figure was 11,300. Thus it would appear that in the third year of the Youth Opportunities Programme, the only year throughout which the undertaking to the long-term young unemployed applied, the number of young unemployed for more than a year increased from 2,600 to 11,300. This, however, is not correct. The figure of 2,600 given by the Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes is the total of those in the January 1980 undertaking group still left on the unemployment register in April 1980. It makes no allowance for those newly joining the ranks of the long-term unemployed during this three month period. This figure should have been given as 5,000. This mistake means that the deterioration during the second year of the undertaking was not so dramatic as suggested above; but, by the same token, the improvement made during the first year was not as impressive as originally claimed by the MSC.

The unravelling of a trail of misleading and erroneous statistics is inevitably a tortuous process. In order to help clarify matters Table 8 (a) sets out a complete quarterly series of figures for the number of young people under the age of 19 registered as unemployed for more than a year, between July 1978 and October 1983⁽³⁸⁾. Judged in terms of its impact on these statistics, the undertaking to the long-term unemployed must be considered a failure. Despite a slight improvement during the first three months, over the complete 15 month period during which the undertaking was in force the number of long-term unemployed young people doubled from 5,700 in January 1980 to 11,300 in April 1981. Of course total unemployment was rising rapidly during this period, but even if these figures are rendered as a proportion of long-term unemployment amongst the working population as a whole, it can be seen from Table 8 (b) that there was a rise from 1.7% to 2.3% over the 15 months covered by the undertaking. Ironically, it was during the period before the undertaking came into force that YOP appears to have made a positive impact on both the numbers and the proportion of the long-term young unemployed. Thereafter, the most that can be said for the undertaking is that its application may have helped to control the growth of this category of youth unemployment. Thus it should be noted that, in the three months following the removal of the undertaking, the number of long-term unemployed young people doubled again, representing another substantial rise as a proportion of total long-term unemployment. Looking over the whole period covered by the Youth Opportunities Programme, it can be seen that although long-term unemployment amongst the under 19s more than trebled, it ended up representing the same proportion of total long-term unemployment in April 1983 as it had in July 1978. Thus, as in the case of the school leaver unemployment, it could be argued that YOP managed to stabilise the growth of this category of youth unemployment in relation to the equivalent category of unemployment amongst all ages. However, unlike the school leaver undertaking, this undertaking does not appear to have substantially fulfilled the specific promises that it made.

TABLE 8 a) YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 19 UNEMPLOYED FOR OVER A YEAR
b) AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN GREAT
 BRITAIN OF OVER A YEAR'S DURATION

		JAN	APR	JUL	OCT
1978	a)			13,000	11,400
	b)			4.0%	3.4%
1979	a)	9,300	9,000	9,600	7,500
	b)	3.1%	2.6%	2.8%	2.2%
1980	a)	5,700	5,000	7,000	8,000
	b)	1.7%	1.5%	2.0%	2.1%
1981	a)	9,400	11,300	22,300	27,900
	b)	2.2%	2.3%	3.8%	3.7%
1982	a)	30,300	31,200	37,100	45,500
	b)	3.5%	3.3%	3.6%	4.1%
1983	a)	43,800	44,100	47,500	58,900
	b)	4.1%	4.0%	4.5%	5.4%

It should now be apparent that the misleading and inadequate way in which the results of the undertaking to the long-term unemployed were reported in the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes was a means of avoiding the admission that the undertaking had not been met. It has already been seen, from the unpublished figures obtained, that the undertaking had a 30% failure rate for the quarter of July to October 1980. One can only speculate about the two quarters that followed; but, given the continued growth of the long-term youth unemployment over this period, it seems unlikely that the failure rate would have been any lower. One final point about the reporting of the undertaking to the long-term unemployed in the Review of the Third Year: the undertaking was supposed to have been continued from the previous year, however, there was a significant change in its wording. The original undertaking, as reported in the Review of the Second Year, was as follows :

"from January 1980 to ensure that any young person becoming unemployed for 12 months should be offered a suitable place on the Programme within 3 months." (39)

The version given in the Review of the Third Year was this:

"to continue to seek to make places available also for young people under 19 who had been unemployed for 12 months or more." (40)

The difference between an undertaking 'to ensure' that something will be done and an undertaking 'to seek to' do something is an important difference. 'Seeking to' is not the same as 'ensuring', and an undertaking to seek to do something can be met whether one succeeds or fails to do that thing, so long as one tries. Thus, rather than admit that they had been unable to meet their publicly given undertaking to the long-term young unemployed, it appears that the MSC chose, retrospectively, to change the wording of the undertaking so that it would be met whether they had succeeded

or failed. This made the publishing of detailed results of the original undertaking unnecessary. All that was necessary was evidence that they had tried - i.e., the 8000 long-term unemployed young people found a place on the programme. Those left without a place, or those refusing to take a place, could be forgotten about. Thus, the undertaking to long-term unemployed young people was rendered meaningless.

In the final two years of the programme, a new undertaking was applied, that to the 'other' 16 and 17 year olds who had been unemployed for three months or more. Compared with the undertaking to the long-term unemployed that it replaced, the period of unemployment necessary to qualify was substantially reduced, but at the same time the age group covered was narrowed by a year. From the very outset YOP had experienced difficulties in attracting 18 year olds. In the first year of the programme, only 10% of its entrants were aged 18, despite the fact that this age group constituted a third of the young unemployed.⁽⁴¹⁾ Initially, this was a matter of concern, and a working group was set up to examine what could be done to attract more 18 year olds into the programme. A case was made out for paying a higher level of allowance to 18 year olds in line with customary wage and benefit differentials. However, this policy was never adopted and the age group continued to be under-represented on the programme.⁽⁴²⁾ Moreover, 18 year olds had a high rate of refusal,⁽⁴³⁾ and they constituted over 50% of those covered by the unsuccessful undertaking to the long-term unemployed. The replacement of that undertaking by the new undertaking to 16 and 17 year old non-school leavers marked the end of any specific obligation to 18 year olds. Although still formally eligible to join the programme, they were pushed to the back in the order of priorities, and only under certain specific circumstances were they actively encouraged to take up a place. YOP in effect redefined itself as a programme focussed on 16 and 17 year olds, with 18 year olds being allowed to take up any spare places.⁽⁴⁴⁾

The new undertaking to 16 and 17 year old non-school leavers was monitored by taking a twice yearly stock count of the young people in this category who were registered unemployed, and then following their progress over the subsequent six month period. In order to meet the undertaking, those unable to find a job and remaining under the age of 18 had to be offered a suitable place on YOP by the end of the six months. As was the case with the undertaking to the long-term unemployed, the results of this undertaking were not fully reported in the Annual Reviews of Special Programmes. In the Review of the Fourth Year, the report was as follows:

"Long term unemployment among under 18 year-olds increased during the period, but was mitigated by the operation of the two undertakings. The proportion of the total unemployed under 18 who had been unemployed for 12 months or more increased from 1.9% in April 1980 (2,100) to 3.5% in April 1981 (5,200) and 5.4% in April 1982 (10,000). The comparable proportion for adults in April 1982 was 32%." (45)

Although the increase of long-term unemployment amongst 16 and 17 year olds is admitted, nothing is said specifically about the results of the undertaking. Moreover, the comparison made with the proportion of long-term unemployment amongst adults is highly misleading. It takes no account of the fact that it is far less likely that someone should remain unemployed for 12 months or more within a two year period than it is within a span of 40 years or more. For a true comparison one would have to look at the proportion of adults remaining unemployed for 12 months or more within a similar two year age span. Yet, at least the Review of the Fourth Year referred to this undertaking. The very brief account of the final year of YOP which was published by the MSC in Youth Training News made no mention of it at all.

Thus, as with the undertaking to the long-term unemployed, the reporting of the results of the undertaking to the 'other' 16 and

17 year olds in the Annual Reviews of Special Programmes was not very satisfactory. However, upon request, the MSC were able to provide some more detailed results. These are set out in Table 9. Unfortunately, they only give an analysis of those left on the register at the end of each six month period. No figures were provided for the numbers successfully placed on the programme. Without such figures it is difficult to get a clear idea of the relative success or failure of the undertaking. Column 5 gives the numbers still waiting for an offer of a place on the programme at the end of each six months, but these cannot be rendered directly as a failure rate in the same way as with the other two undertakings. The only way to calculate such a failure rate is to use the analysis of annual entrants provided by the Reviews of the last two years of the programme. Using these figures, and combining the results of the undertaking into pairs, it is possible to calculate a failure rate in each of these two years which should be comparable with those calculated for the school leaver undertaking. The figures arrived at are 9.9% for 1981/82 and 8.0% for 1982/83. Both are considerably higher than the failure rate in any year of the school leaver undertaking, but less than any of the figures available for the undertaking to the long-term unemployed (which it will be remembered were understated by comparison). Similarly, refusal rates can be calculated in a manner which is comparable to that used for the school leaver undertaking. The figures arrived at are 10.9% for 1981/82 and 24.4% for 1982/83; once again, considerably higher than those for the school leaver undertaking, yet less than those for the undertaking to the long-term unemployed. Taking both the failure rate and the refusal rate of this undertaking into account, it can be seen why the MSC was perhaps reluctant to provide the results in full or to give them much publicity.

Finally, as with the other two undertakings, the performance of the undertaking to the 'other' 16 and 17 year olds can also be gauged in terms of its impact upon the relevant unemployment statistics.

TABLE 9 THE RESULTS OF THE UNDERTAKING TO THE 'OTHER' 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS

	1	2	3	4	5
	No. of young people covered by undertaking	No. included in 1 who registered after taking part in YOP or CI	No. included in 1 who refused a place on YOP or CI	No. included in 1 who were waiting to take up a place on YOP	No. included in 1 who were yet to receive an offer of a YOP place
APRIL 1981 - OCTOBER 1981	52,025	30,614	10,937	2,679	7,777
OCTOBER 1981 - APRIL 1982	36,316	16,126	9,841	946	9,403
APRIL 1982 - OCTOBER 1982	50,441	19,225	23,812	1,563	5,841
OCTOBER 1982 - APRIL 1983	42,277	19,849	14,326	2,316	5,799

Table 10 (a) sets out the quarterly figures between January 1980 and October 1983 for those under 18 unemployed for six months or more, and Table 10 (b) renders these figures as percentages of this category of unemployment amongst all ages.⁽⁴⁶⁾ From this evidence it can be seen that, during the period covered by the undertaking, the number of 16 and 17 year olds unemployed for six months or more not only trebled, but continued to rise as a proportion of the equivalent figure for all ages.

Looking back now over the performance of all three of the undertakings, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, it must be acknowledged that, under the prevailing circumstances, the substantial fulfilment of the school leaver undertaking in each year of the programme was a truly remarkable achievement. However, the significance of this achievement, in terms other than pure logistics, is more open to question. While it is true that the school leaver undertaking helped to ensure that great efforts were made to find places on the programme for some of the more difficult youngsters in this category, it is also true to say that it tended to divert attention away from other youngsters, whose need may have been as great, but who did not happen to be school leavers. Of course the other two undertakings were introduced to cover other groups which were considered to be in particular need, but still these were general definitions of need which did not take any account of individual circumstances. Moreover, as we have seen, these other undertakings appear to have been far less successful in meeting their targets than the school leaver undertaking. The word 'appear' has to be used, given the MSC's failure to publish full sets of results for these undertakings. Yet, there can be little doubt that by comparison with the school leaver undertaking they did fail, and this way why the full results were not published. This raises the questions of how meaningful are public undertakings, if the results are only published when they are successfully met? It seems to this observer that the failure of the MSC to make a full statement of the results of the undertakings given to the long-term young unemployed and the 'other' 16 and 17 year olds did more to devalue the achievement of the school leaver undertaking

TABLE 10 a) YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 18 UNEMPLOYED FOR OVER SIX MONTHS
 b) AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN GREAT
BRITAIN OF OVER SIX MONTHS DURATION

		JAN	APR	JUL	OCT
1980	a)	17,000	14,000	11,000	19,000
	b)	3.0%	2.3%	1.8%	2.7%
1981	a)	47,000	39,000	37,000	39,000
	b)	5.3%	3.4%	2.8%	2.6%
1982	a)	53,000	54,000	48,000	46,000
	b)	3.4%	3.3%	2.9%	2.7%
1983	a)	43,000	58,000	54,000	56,000
	b)	2.6%	3.2%	3.2%	3.4%

than the fact that these results may not have been particularly satisfactory.

A further criticism that can be made of the undertakings in general, and of the school leaver undertaking in particular, is that by inviting the public to judge the performance of the programme purely in terms of its quantitative input, they distorted the development of YOP and distracted attention away from certain other important goals. Each year, with the possible exception of the fifth, was dominated by the race to meet the undertakings; and what happened to the young people, both whilst they were on the programme and when they came out of it at the end, was relegated to a matter of secondary importance. It has already been seen how the development of the balance of the programme was largely dictated by the need to meet ever-increasing quantitative targets at maximum speed and minimum cost. If the series of unemployment statistics provided for each of the undertaking groups is referred back to again, it will be remembered that none of the undertakings, not even that to the school leavers, appeared to make a significant impact. Given the large numbers in each category (even in the case of the less successful undertakings) that were taken off the unemployment register and onto YOP for six months or so, it seems remarkable that the unemployment levels in these categories should have continued to rise as rapidly as they did, keeping pace with and in some cases outstripping the rate of growth for the equivalent categories of unemployment amongst all ages. This would seem to indicate that, however successful the programme was in finding places for the young people in the undertaking groups, a large proportion of them were returning to the unemployment register after the completion of their time on the programme. This raises the question of how successful YOP was in its objective of enhancing the employability of young people.

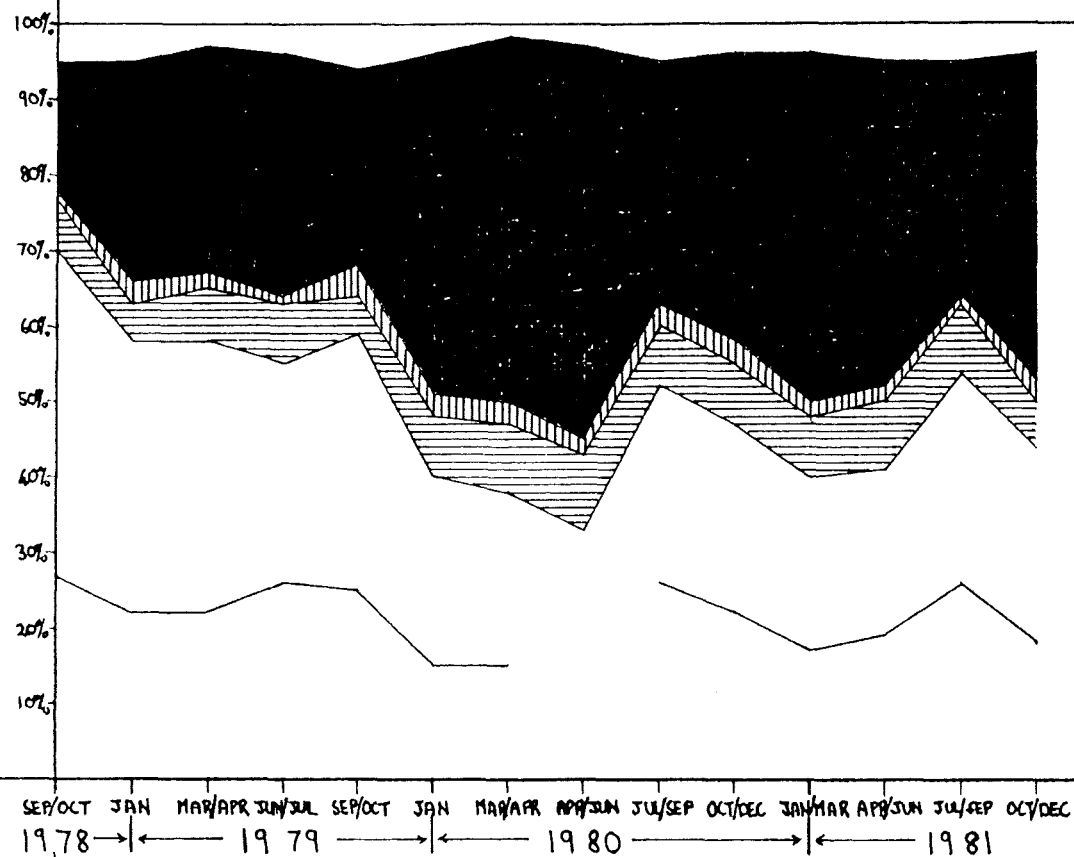
5. Employability

The prime objective of the Youth Opportunities Programme, as delineated in the Holland Report, was to help unemployed young people obtain permanent employment at the first possible opportunity. This objective was inherited by YOP from the Work Experience Programme, which was generally regarded as having performed well in relation to this criterion. Follow-up surveys revealed that 75% or more of WEP trainees had managed to obtain permanent employment, and it was assumed that YOP would enjoy similar success.⁽⁴⁷⁾ The initial advertising campaign that was aimed at potential trainees pictured the unemployed school leaver as being trapped in a vicious circle between unemployment and lack of experience: 'I can't get a job without experience; I can't get experience without a job'.⁽⁴⁸⁾ The promise was held out that the opportunities for work experience and work related training offered by the Youth Opportunities Programme would help the young person to break out of this circle.

Throughout the history of the programme, various follow-up surveys were made in order to ascertain what had happened to YOP trainees after they had left their schemes. These follow-ups were conducted separately by the SPD for the work experience schemes, and by the TSD for the work preparation courses.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Both involved the use of simple postal questionnaires which asked ex-trainees to indicate what they were doing, first, immediately after their scheme, and secondly, at the time of the survey. Work experience trainees were surveyed approximately 12 months after their entry to the programme (thus, on average, roughly 6 months after leaving), whereas work preparation trainees were surveyed approximately 3 months after leaving (i.e. 6 months approximately after entry). The size of sample used for the work experience scheme follow-ups varied between 28% and 1.5% of the total entry, but was generally at the lower end of this range. The response rate to this survey was generally between 50% and 70%. The work preparation course follow-ups took a regular 1 in 6 sample of ex-trainees, considerably

larger than the average percentage taken for work experience schemes. However, the response rate was generally under 50% and on one occasion, as low as 30%. The work experience scheme follow-ups were carried out at regular quarterly intervals throughout the life-time of the programme, starting with the entrants of September 1978. The work preparation course follow-ups were also quarterly, but did not start until the first quarter of 1980 and were discontinued in the 3rd quarter of 1982. The results of the two series of the follow-ups, with regard to the situation of ex-trainees at the time of the surveys, are set out separately in Figures 5 and 6.

The results for work experience schemes, shown in Figure 5, can be compared with those obtained previously by the Work Experience Programme. It can be seen that from the outset, with the entrants of September and October 1978, YOP was unable to reproduce the 75% plus employment placement rate achieved by WEP. Moreover, having started with a 70% employment rate, the figure for YOP work experience trainees fell steadily until it reached a low point of 33% for the entrants of the second quarter of 1980. Thereafter, it picked up again to just over 50% in the next quarter, and then varied between this level and 40% for the remainder of the programme. The average over the whole series of follow-ups was roughly 50%. Meanwhile, throughout the history of the programme, the unemployment rate amongst ex-trainees varied in an inverse relationship to the employment rate, starting off at 17% and reaching a highpoint of 52% in the second quarter of 1980. The other possible categories - 'on another scheme', 'in full-time education' and 'other', - all remained relatively stable throughout the programme, though it appears that more trainees were taken on by another scheme when the employment rate dipped. It will also be noted that the category of 'employed' was divided between those trainees who were taken on by their scheme sponsors and those who were taken on by other employers. Generally, between a third and a half of all trainees employed were taken on by their sponsors, and the vast majority of these were WEEP sponsors.



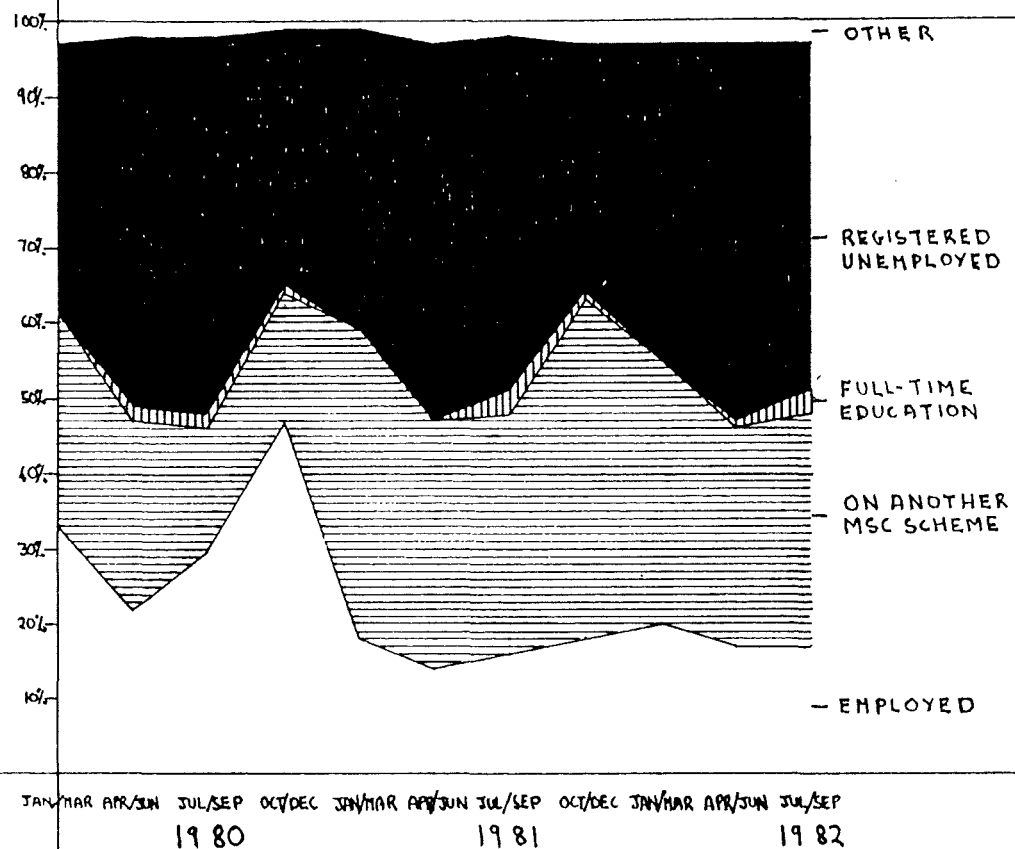
As well as providing results for work experience schemes in general, the follow-up surveys differentiated between the various scheme types. Generally, the employment placement rate of the WEEP schemes was considerably higher than that of the other work experience schemes. Thus the average for WEEP over the complete series of follow-ups was 56%, compared with 39% for Community Projects and 34% for Training Workshops. This difference can be accounted for to a large extent by the extra opportunity that WEEP trainees had to be taken on directly by their sponsors. However, it also needs to be pointed out that Community Projects and Training Workshops tended to take on young people who were more disadvantaged in the first place. Allowing for this factor, there was some evidence to show that with certain types of trainee these schemes were at least as successful as the WEEP schemes.⁽⁵¹⁾

Turning now to the work preparation courses, it can be seen from Figure 6 that their employment placement rates were in general considerably lower than those for the work experience schemes. Thus, the average rate over the period covered by the surveys was only 23%, almost exactly half of that for the work experience schemes over the same period.⁽⁵²⁾ However, if the unemployment rates are compared in the same way, the difference is much less - 43% for the work preparation courses compared with 40% for the work experience schemes. This is explained by the fact that a much higher proportion of work preparation trainees went on into a second YOP scheme, generally in the work experience sector. Perhaps surprisingly, the proportion of work preparation trainees entering full-time education was slightly smaller than that of work experience trainees.

Unfortunately, because the two sets of follow-ups were not timed or spaced in the same way, it is impossible to combine their results together to show the trends amongst all ex-YOP trainees during the period in which both surveys were in operation. On both graphs there can be seen to be a certain annual cycle, but whether one works on the basis of dates of entry, dates of leaving, or dates of survey, the graphs do not appear to align with each other over the same period. The most that can be done is to provide combined averages. Thus, working on the basis of leaving dates,

FIGURE 6

NATIONAL 1 IN 6 FOLLOW-UPS OF TSD TRAINEES LEAVING SCHEMES,
JANUARY 1980 - SEPTEMBER 1982 (RESULTS AT TIME OF SURVEY)



the average employment rate at the time of survey for trainees leaving all forms of YOP schemes and courses between January 1980 and September 1982 was 42%, and the average unemployment rate was 40%. In other words, from the last quarter of the second year onwards, ex-YOP trainees were almost as likely to be found on the dole as in employment, if asked what they were doing between 3 and 6 months after leaving their schemes.

Clearly, this was not the level of success that was originally anticipated for YOP when the enhancement of young people's employability was outlined as the prime objective. Furthermore, it is noticeable that, as was the case with the undertakings the Commission's reporting of the programme's performance in relation to this criterion became less candid as it failed to match up to expectations. Although it was always possible to obtain upon request the full results of the various follow-up surveys, those published in the Annual Reviews of Special Programmes and elsewhere became increasingly selective in what they revealed. In particular, after the first two years of the programme, they abandoned using the employment placement rate as the criterion of success, and substituted for it the combined rate for employment, full-time education or another scheme.⁽⁵³⁾ This had the desired effect of keeping most of the figures over 50%. It also became the common practice to present these results in conjunction with statistics illustrating the rapid rise of the general rate of unemployment. Thus it was tacitly being acknowledged that the general state of the labour market, rather than anything being done to enhance the employability of the trainees, was the crucial factor in deciding the placement rates at the end of the schemes.

This fact was explicitly acknowledged in the conclusions drawn by a report on the work experience scheme follow-up surveys which was made by the Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division of the MSC.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Moreover, this report went further in suggesting that not only were the placement rates of the work experience schemes

directly dependent upon the general state of the economy, but also that they were likely to be adversely affected by any large increases in the scale of work experience provision with employers which took place under such circumstances. The point was made as follows:

"Work Experience Schemes are dependent upon the economy as a whole to 'provide' places on schemes with employers; so the conditions that are most likely to lead to success in the sense of a high rate of placements into permanent employment are particularly likely to be absent when most needed, that is, when schemes are at their largest." (55)

It was further noted that in many cases where schemes had apparently helped trainees into employment, their manner of doing so was not as might have been expected. Referring to the large number of trainees taken on by their sponsors, the report stated:

"Instead of the schemes providing work experience which then makes the young people more attractive to potential employers, 50% of WEEP placings (and thus 40% of all placings) are made as a result of providing 'entry ports' for young people into their sponsors' internal labour markets." (56)

In addition to the basic question concerning the employment status of the ex-trainee, the work experience scheme follow-ups asked certain other questions. This allowed a multi-variate analysis to be made of how a number of different factors might affect the employment prospects of individual trainees. One such factor was the length of time that a trainee had spent on their scheme. Looking at the matter rather simplistically, it might be thought that if work experience schemes were really succeeding in enhancing the employability of trainees, the longer that a trainee stayed on a scheme, the better should be their chances of employment at the end. In fact, except in the case of those who were taken on by their sponsors, the evidence clearly showed that the opposite was true: the longer a trainee stayed on a

scheme, the less chance they had of gaining employment afterwards. This did not necessarily imply that the schemes were incapable of enhancing the employability of trainees, but it did suggest that there were real limitations which had perhaps been underestimated. The conclusions set out in the report were as follows:

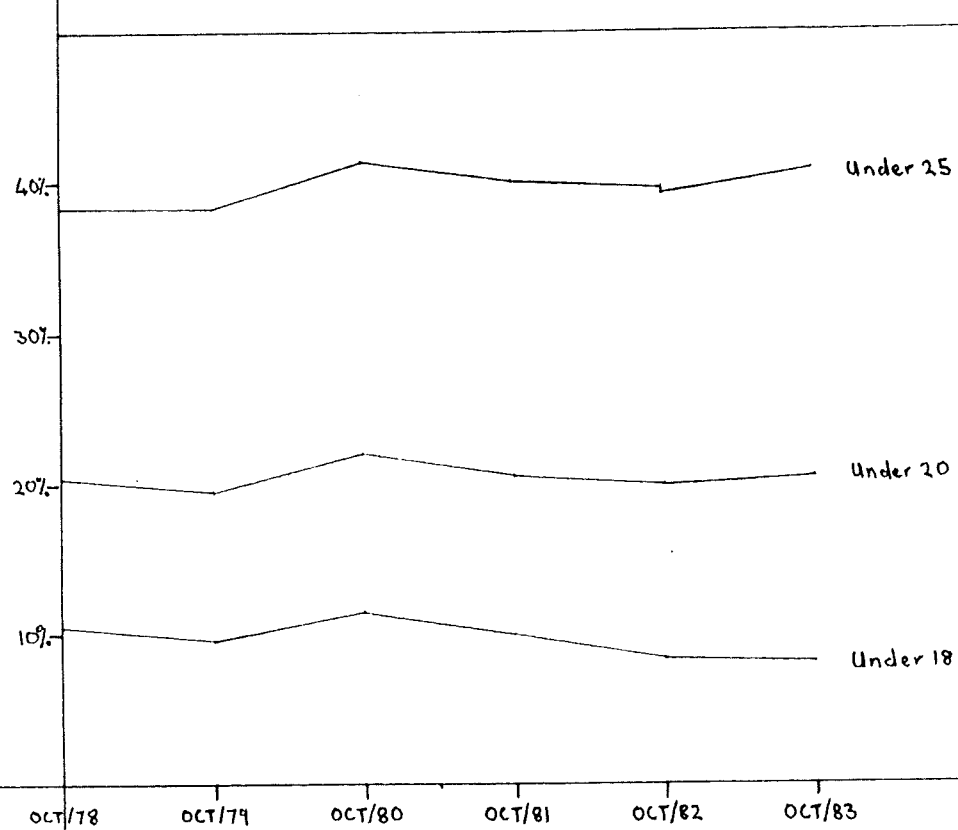
"a) those who gain jobs quickly may well have done so irrespective of WE schemes influence;

b) many of these who stay for a long time, do not gain employment because their scheme has not been able to increase their "employability" adequately. This is not to say, necessarily, that WE schemes are a failure, but rather that with hindsight the objectives they were set were unrealistic in view of the determining influence of the economy, and the secondary influence of those deep-seated characteristics of applicants which made them less able and unqualified to begin with." (57)

In addition to the regular postal follow-up surveys, the MSC commissioned the Office of Population, Census and Surveys (OPCS) to carry out two separate and more detailed interview surveys. The first of these covered 1978-79 entrants and was conducted in March 1980, the second covered 1980-81 entrants and took place in April 1982. (58) Both generally confirmed the basic information about employment status which had been obtained from the postal surveys of entrants during these two periods. The first also provided the basis for a postal re-contact survey which was carried out in March 1981, a year after the original interviews. This was done in conjunction with two other postal re-contact surveys carried out in February 1981 and July 1981 using ex-work experience trainees who had answered the regular postal follow-up surveys a year earlier. (59) The idea of these postal re-contacts was to establish how ex-trainees fared over a longer period after leaving their schemes. Most of the respondents had been in the labour market for at least a year since leaving their scheme and were 18 or older when re-contacted. The evidence from the regular postal follow-ups and the March 1980 OPCS interview survey was that employment rates nearly always increased over the period of roughly 6 months between the leaving date and the survey date.

However, all three of the postal re-contact surveys indicated that in the longer-term, over the period of a year between the original survey and the re-contact, the proportion in employment declined (by 4 - 8 percentage points) and the proportion registered as unemployed increased (by 6 - 10 percentage points). Of course, during this year there was a particularly sharp rise in the general level of unemployment (4 percentage points between March 1980 and March 1981), and as the article which reported these results pointed out, no firm conclusions could be reached about the effect of YOP on employability in the absence of knowledge about a comparable group of young people who had not been on YOP schemes. Nevertheless, reversing as it did the trend of improvement previously observed over the first 6 months after leaving, this evidence concerning the longer-term prospects of ex-trainees acted to undermine further the confidence which had originally been expressed in the capacity of these schemes to bring about a substantial and lasting improvement in the employability of young people.

As was the case with the undertakings, a way of trying to assess the impact of YOP which allows for the general increase of unemployment, is to look at youth unemployment levels. This has already been done for the specific undertaking groups, and it was noted that even in the case of the 'successful' school leaver undertaking the impact was very slight. Figure 7 shows youth unemployment as a proportion of total unemployment at each October between 1978 and 1983.⁽⁶³⁾ It is divided into three age groups, under 18s, under 20s and under 25s. The first point to be noted is that, apart from a slight peak reached by each of them in 1980, there were no substantial changes in any of the proportions during this six year period. The proportion represented by the under 18s fell from 10.4% in October 1978 to 8.1% in October 1983, but the proportion for 18 to 19 year olds rose by as much over the same period, leaving the figure for all those under 20 virtually unchanged. Meanwhile, the proportion for 20-24 year olds rose slightly, lifting the figure for all those under 25 up to 40.8% in October 1983 compared with 38.3% in October 1978. Thus, the only detectable

FIGURE 7YOUNG PEOPLE AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT 1978-1983

positive influence of YOP upon these statistics was upon the proportion of under 18s. Yet, this can easily be accounted for by the sizeable proportion of the age group that were taken off the labour market for the six months or so that they were actually in the programme. In contrast, in the 18 to 19 age group only a small proportion would still have been within YOP, but there would have been many who had been through it. Furthermore, an increasing number each year of those in the 20-24 age group would have been ex-YOP's. The fact that unemployment amongst both of these age groups continued to rise as a proportion of total unemployment would tend to suggest that any effect that YOP had on the trends of youth unemployment was through temporarily taking a large number of young people out of the labour market, rather than through enhancing their employability in the longer-term. Certainly, there is no evidence to be found in such statistics that YOP made any positive impact on the competitiveness of young people in the labour market.

Of course, it can always be speculated what would have happened without YOP. However, there is no way of knowing what difference this would have made with regard to longer-term employment prospects of young people. Obviously, many of those who were taken into the programme would otherwise have remained unemployed, at least in the immediate future. But whether, in the longer-term, they would have been slower and less likely to find permanent jobs is something which cannot now be proved. In this regard, it is unfortunate that the follow-up surveys, by which the MSC endeavoured to monitor the programme's performance as a route to employment, did not include any control groups consisting of comparable young people who did not go through YOP. However, these surveys were only devised "as something of an after-thought";⁽⁶¹⁾ and, even if they had been better planned in this respect, it would have been difficult to find a representative control group, given the existence of the undertakings. As it was, neither these surveys nor the unemployment statistics were able to provide any evidence that YOP was actually succeeding in enhancing young

people's employability. Indeed, there was no evidence that the programme was having any more long-term effect on youth unemployment than might a raising of the school leaving age, or any other method of keeping an equivalent number of young people off the streets for an equivalent length of time. What is more as will be seen below, there was certain evidence to suggest that its effect might have been less.

Although originally the prime objective of the programme, the improvement of employability was not the only criterion besides the undertakings by which success or failure could be assessed. As the objective measure of the employment placement rates proved increasingly disappointing, more emphasis was given to the subjective attitudes of trainees which were monitored as part of the same programme of follow-up surveys. Thus, ex-work experience trainees were asked whether in general they had found their schemes useful or not, and what in particular they had liked or disliked. Although affected by the declining employment placement rate, the general level of satisfaction expressed remained comparatively high throughout the programme. Thus, the brief final review of YOP which was published by the MSC was able to draw some comfort from the headline 'satisfied but not always employed', under which it was reported that seven out of ten participants were either satisfied or very satisfied with their experience and felt that it had been of benefit. (62)

Some caution should be expressed about the results of the postal follow-ups on this matter. Those who had been dissatisfied with the programme would have been less likely to respond to such surveys, and those who did respond, might have been inhibited in expressing their dissatisfaction by the knowledge that the research was being carried out by MSC. However, as was the case with regard to employment placement rates, the results were largely confirmed by the surveys carried out by the OPCS, which were not so directly associated with the MSC and which, as interview surveys, had a higher response rate than the postal follow-ups. (63) These OPCS

surveys also helped to confirm what were the major likes and dislikes of the trainees. The most commonly expressed likes were for the type of work done, and for their workmates and the general atmosphere of the scheme. The most commonly expressed dislikes were about 'the money' and about being used to do work which should have been done by regular employees. Overall, more of the trainees mentioned particular things that they liked, than mentioned particular things that they disliked. (64)

The general impressions that YOP could be of benefit, even if it did not lead to permanent employment, was further corroborated by an independent research study which examined the psychological effects of being on a scheme rather than unemployed. (65) The study gave more emphasis to the trainees' negative feelings towards their schemes - they realised that the schemes could do little to enhance their chances of getting permanent employment and often they felt that they were being exploited as cheap labour. Nevertheless, despite these negative feelings, the researchers found that the trainees were receiving tangible psychological benefits from being on the schemes. Thus, objective tests confirmed the common observations of trainees and supervisors that being on a scheme enhanced trainees' feelings of well-being and self-esteem, in comparison with when they had previously been unemployed. Indeed, measured in these terms, it was found that gaining a place on a YOP scheme had almost the same positive effect as getting a real job. (66)

This illustrates the point that YOP could have benefits which were independent of, or at least undetectable in terms of, the employment placement rates of its trainees. It is necessary, then, to examine the performance of the programme in terms of the intrinsic quality of its content, as well as in terms of the quantities of its inputs and outputs.

Footnotes

- (1) The most important change in the method of counting the unemployed was that which took place in October 1982. The basis of the count was then shifted from the number registering as unemployed to the number registering for benefits. Because there are certain categories of people who may register as unemployed but not be eligible for benefits, the introduction of the new method brought about an instant reduction in the official unemployment total. As a test, both methods were used in October 1982, and the difference was found to be some 246,000. Following the change, the historical series of unemployment totals presented in the Employment Gazette were altered retrospectively, so that they would be comparable with the figures being produced by the new method. However, the figure given above for April 1978 is the figure that was published in the Department of Employment Gazette at the time. The retrospectively altered figure published in Employment Gazettes after November 1982 is 1,187,500. Reversing this alteration, it is possible to calculate that if counted by the old method the total for April 1983 would have been approximately 3,567,500 rather than 3,053,300.
- (2) See above, Chapter 3 p.113. See also, MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, pp.22-23 and 52-53.
- (3) The figures for the actual level of unemployment are those based on the pre-October 1982 method of counting, which is the method that would have been assumed to apply when the Holland Report predictions were made. In order to avoid discontinuity the graph has not been extended to August 1983.
- (4) Once again the figures for reality are those based on the pre-October 1982 method of counting, and therefore differ from the retrospectively altered figures presented in the Employment Gazette after November 1982.
- (5) See MSC, op.cit., p.52, para.3.
- (6) The source of the annual totals of YOP entrants in Figure 4 is MSC, Youth Training News, Issue 6, September 1983, p.8.
- (7) Table 2 is a reproduction of Table 3 in ibid., p.10.
- (8) The original budget for YOP in the financial year 1979/80 had been £167.7m. This was revised down to £142.5m in June 1979 following the election of the Conservative Government.

In total, the MSC had to make cuts of £115m during the financial year, £68.4m of these being imposed upon the Special Programmes Division. This meant halving the budget of STEP, as well as reducing that of YOP. Despite this reduction, YOP was approximately 15% underspent at the end of the year. (Source: Special Programmes Board Paper, SPB/79/24.)

- (9) See, for example, MSC, Draft Corporate Plan, Chapter 4 Table 2, as reproduced in House of Commons Papers 444i, MSC Expenditure and Staff 1979-84, (Document M8).
- (10) See MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.12, para.3.3.
- (11) See MSC, Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes, in Special Programmes News, Special Issue, October 1982, p.16
- (12) It should be noted that these figures take no account of the rate of inflation over the intervening period.
- (13) See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.36, para.3.9; and MSC, Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes, op.cit., p.17.
- (14) See MSC, Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes, op.cit., p.17.
- (15) Table 3 is compiled on the basis of figures provided in the reviews of each of the five years of Special Programmes, plus the Holland Report plan which is reproduced as Table 1 of Chapter 3.
- (16) This was stated in a paper presented to the Special Programmes Board in May 1978 (Source: SPB/78/M3), and was implied in MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.16, para. 1.40.
- (17) See MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.17, para. 11, and MSC, Network, Autumn 1981
- (18) See MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, p.34, para.3.19.
- (19) Following a review carried out in May/June 1978 to find the reasons for the failure of EICs to attract sponsors, arrangements were introduced to offer greater financial incentives: see MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.22, para.1.67. However, these do not appear to have made any difference. According to one MSC official involved in the planning of YOP, "EICs never had a chance, they were simply a wild dream of Geoffrey Holland's largely to get the employers involved in the programme.

- (20) Apparently, EICs and the work experience/work preparation composition of YOP were 'bounced off' the Holland Working Party at its last meeting.
- (21) Table 4 is a reproduction of Table 9 in MSC, 'Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes, op.cit., p.16.
- (22) This account of New Training Places is derived from a circular sent by the Department of Employment to inform LEA Careers Services.
- (23) See MSC, Youth Training News, September 1983, p.9. It should be noted, however, that it was originally intended that the 100,000 NTPs would be ready by September 1982.
- (24) Geoffrey Holland, 'Local Delivery of Central Government Programmes: A Case Study from the Manpower Services Commission' - a speech delivered at the Royal Institute of Public Administration Annual Conference on September 11th 1982.
- (25) MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, p.38, para.3.53. 'Young people' in this context meant 16 - 18 year olds.
- (26) Albert Booth quoted in the Department of Employment Gazette, July 1977, p.690.
- (27) See MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, pp.6-7, para.1.12.
- (28) See MSC, Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes, op.cit., p.3.
- (29) The results of the school leavers undertaking during the first four years of YOP are given in the annual reviews of Special Programmes. The result for the fifth can be found in the MSC Annual Report 1982/83.
- (30) More than 3,000 school leavers were still without the offer of a place at Easter. It can therefore be questioned how significant was the bringing forward of the undertaking date to Christmas.
- (31) MSC, Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes, op.cit., p.3
- (32) Table 6 is based on figures provided by the Employment Gazette. These are the unadjusted pre-October 1982 figures, based on the old method of collection. In order to obtain the average for 1982, it was necessary to make estimates of what the November and December figures would have been if the old method had continued to be used.

- (33) See MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, pp.6-7, paras. 1.12 - 1.13.
- (34) The only figure given was the percentage of the total number of entrants during the year (1979/80) that were long-term unemployed. This was 3%. (See MSC, op.cit., p.7, para.1.16). If it were assumed that this was constant throughout the year, then it could be estimated that some 1,650 long-term unemployed young people entered YOP between January 1st and March 31st 1980. This would give a failure rate, comparable to those calculated for the school leaver undertaking, of almost 29% for the quarter.
- (35) Once again, the only figure available is that for the percentage of the total number of entrants during the year (1980/81) who had been unemployed for more than 12 months. This time it was 2% (see MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.4, para. 1.7.). Assuming as above, it can be estimated that 2380 long-term unemployed young people entered the programme during the quarter, giving a comparable failure rate of some 45%
- (36) MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.4, para.1.4.
- (37) MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, p.7, para.1.13.
- (38) The source of Table 8 is the Employment Gazette, Table 2.6. This series of statistics does not appear to have been altered following the change in method of collection in October 1982. Thus, it is possible to give a continuous set of figures up to the end of 1983. However, it should be taken into account that the change of method must have had some effect on these statistics, if only a year later.
- (39) MSC, op.cit., p.7.
- (40) MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.3.
- (41) See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.13, para 1.29.
- (42) The Special Programmes Board discussed the lack of 18 year old entering YOP at a meeting in February 1979. It was considered whether to raise the allowance for this age group, and a working group was set up to examine this and other options. However, by the time that this working group reported in July, cuts had been imposed on the MSC and it was no longer regarded as practical to introduce the scale of differential that was needed to be effective.
- (43) The high rate of refusals amongst 18 year olds was revealed

by a paper presented to the Special Programmes Board in February 1979 based on evidence given by Principal Careers Officers.

- (44) See MSC, Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes, op.cit., p.12
- (45) Ibid., p.3.
- (46) The source of Table 10, as of Table 8, is the Employment Gazette, Table 2.6. The same comments apply as above in footnote 38.
- (47) See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.19. para.1.50.
- (48) See MSC, Youth Training News, Issue 6, September 1983, p.8.
- (49) The results of the first eight follow-ups of ex-work experience trainees were analysed in the following report: MSC, Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division, 'Work Experience Schemes: Report of Follow-up Surveys', June 1982. There were also individual reports on each of these and the subsequent work experience follow-ups, which were presented as papers to the Special Programmes Board. The results of the follow-ups of ex-work preparation trainees were analysed in an internal paper entitled 'Youth Opportunities Programme: 1 in 6 Follow-up of TSD Ex-Trainees' (April, 1983).
- (50) It should be noted that the results 'at survey' generally showed employment placement rates slightly above those 'on leaving'.
- (51) See David O'Connor (Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division, MSC), 'Probabilities of employment after work experience', Employment Gazette, January 1982, pp.9-10.
- (52) It is difficult to match up the series of survey results exactly. For the purposes of this comparison the average was taken from the eleven work experience scheme follow-ups on trainees entering YOP between June/July 1979 and October/December 1981. The average employment rate over this period was 46%.
- (53) Compare MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, p.7. para.1.15; and MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.7, Table 3.
- (54) See above, footnote 49.

- (55) MSC, Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division, 'Work Experience Schemes: Report of Follow-up Surveys', June 1982, para.6.2.
- (56) Ibid., para 6.3.
- (57) Ibid., para.6.7.
- (58) Analyses of the results of these two OPCS interview surveys have been published in the MSC's Research and Development Series. See Trevor Bedeman and Juliet Harvey, Young People on YOP A National Survey of Entrants to the Youth Opportunities Programme, MSC Special Programmes, Research and Development Series: No.3, December 1981; and Trevor Bedeman and Gill Courtenay, One in Three The Second National Survey of Young people on YOP, Summer 1980 to Spring 1982, MSC, Training Division, Research and Development Series: No.13, February 1983. Both surveys involved a weighted sample of approximately 3,000 trainees, representing a response rate of over 80%.
- (59) See, L. Dawes, T. Bedeman, J. Harvey, MSC 'What happens after YOP - a longer-term view', Employment Gazette, January 1982.
- (60) The source of Figure 7 is Table 2.7 of the Employment Gazette. For October 1982, the figures were given according to both the old and new methods of counting. Both of these are recorded on Figure 7, and it can be seen that it made only a very slight difference to the Under 25s percentage.
- (61) MSC, Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division, op.cit., para.6.10.
- (62) See MSC, Youth Training News, Issue No.6, September 1983, p.9.
- (63) See Trevor Bedeman and Juliet Harvey, op.cit., p.19; and Trevor Bedeman and Gill Courtenay, op.cit., p.20.
- (64) See Trevor Bedeman and Gill Courtenay, op.cit., p.31.
- (65) See Glynis Breakwell, Barbara Harrison and Carol Propper, 'The psychological benefits of YOPs', New Society, 23 September 1982 pp.494-5. The evidence relevant to YOP was a small part of more general study of the social psychology of young people in and out of work. This study was funded by the Social Science Research Council and the Department of Employment.

- (66) See ibid., p.495. It is interesting to note that the increased feelings of well-being and self-esteem of trainees would not necessarily have improved their chances of finding permanent employment. The study found that amongst unemployed young people it was those with the lowest mental health and self-esteem scores who were most likely to find jobs or places on YOP.

CHAPTER 5

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE
OF THE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES
PROGRAMME: PART II QUALITY

1. Quality Improvement and Training Content

Although the most prominent theme of the development of YOP over its five year history was that of quantitative growth, an important sub-theme, which on occasion broke surface as the key issue of the moment, was that of quality improvement. The Holland Report viewed YOP's qualitative advance upon existing provision as being at least as important as the quantitative development which it represented. Moreover, quality improvement was related to the question of YOP's status as a training programme. As we have seen, there was a certain amount of ambiguity about this in the Holland Report. YOP was never referred to as a training programme per se yet those who participated in it were to have the status of trainees and to be paid only an allowance. In order to provide some justification for this situation it was important that, if not a training programme as such, YOP should at least have a substantial training content to which every trainee would have some access. This it was confidently believed could be provided within the integrated framework of the new programme. Thus, the Secretary of the State, Albert Booth, said when he announced his plans for YOP:

"It meets the criticism that existing provisions do not provide adequate training for young people by integrating a series of measures for unemployed young people in the 16-18 age group which will provide them with a combination of training and work experience." (1)

The combination of training and work experience which was originally promised to YOP trainees depended upon three features of the programme: the overall balance of provision between work experience and work preparation; the capacity for movement and progression between different schemes and courses;

and the integration of different elements of content within individual schemes and courses. As we have already seen, the pressure to pursue quantitative goals distorted the overall balance between work experience and work preparation which had originally been intended. Moreover, the pressure of numbers, combined with the effect that it had upon the balance of the programme, made it extremely difficult to offer planned progression to trainees.⁽²⁾ In particular, the demise of Employment Induction Courses took away the element of work preparation which could most easily have been combined in sequence with the various work experience schemes. However, the fact that these two features of balance and progression did not develop as intended, did not eliminate the possibility of trainees being offered a combination of work experience and training within the framework of the programme. But it did mean that this depended upon the qualitative development of individual schemes and courses, and in particular, upon the integration of training content within the work experience schemes which came to constitute the vast majority of the programme.

2. The Initial Approach to Quality Improvement and its Measurement

The content of work experience schemes specified by the Holland Report was based on the four elements of induction, planned work experience, an opportunity for training or further education, and counselling. Although these same formal elements of content had previously been applied to the Work Experience Programme, it was stressed, particularly in relationship to WEEP, that certain improvements could be made. Only a small proportion of WEP trainees had actually received their entitlement to off-the-job training or further education.⁽³⁾ In the case of the new WEEP schemes, it was stated that, "increased emphasis should be given to the provision of life and social skills courses and the opportunity to participate in this sort of training and in further education courses should become a feature of such schemes."⁽⁴⁾ Also it was stated that further guidance should be developed on induction training and that adequate resources should be guaranteed to allow for the provision of proper counselling.

When YOP was first launched in April 1978, an ad hoc advisory group was set up to advise the Director of Special Programmes (Geoffrey Holland) on the development of the educational and training content of the new programme. The group was known as the PROFILE Task Group, the initials standing for "the promotion of improved learning experiences." Its membership consisted of between 20 and 30 people with relevant knowledge and experience of the training and education of young people, acting in their own individual capacities rather than as representatives of the organisations from which they were drawn. They were serviced jointly by the MSC and the DES.⁽⁵⁾

PROFILE initially established for itself four main lines of activity. These were: a) the development of principles to be used in the preparation of guidelines to assist both the

providers of opportunities and MSC staff in improving the quality of opportunities on offer; (b) the establishment of an information network for the purpose of disseminating and publicising interesting achievements and developments within the programme and elsewhere; (c) the sponsoring and encouraging of action research projects, in particular related to the implementation of PROFILE principles, and (d) the provision of information and advice on the training of tutors, supervisors and sponsors' staff associated with the programme. (6)

The first of these lines of activity led to the publication, in February 1979, of Making Experience Work. This was a PROFILE report which set out in draft form a series of principles and guidelines for the provision of work experience. The principles were formulated on the premiss that although the primary objective of YOP was to get unemployed young people into jobs as soon as possible the programme must also have longer-term and wider aims. It should contribute to raising the general quality of the workforce and should provide young people with learning experiences of lasting benefit. (7) Three principles followed:

- "1. Young people should be considered as trainees and opportunities should be tailored to their needs;
2. Young people should have the chance to acquire skills which (a) are relevant to a developing labour market and are not confined to the practices of an individual employer, (b) help them in their search for work, and (c) help them in meeting the wider demands of adult life;
3. Experience gained on-the-job and off-the-job are of equal importance, and should be mutually reinforcing." (8)

On the basis of these three principles, the report proceeded to outline a series of guidelines which were designed to help both the providers of opportunities and those wishing to judge the validity of proposals. It was not expected that they would be implemented immediately, but it was hoped that they would be widely disseminated and adopted as the goals of a gradual process of quality improvement. These guidelines covered three main areas: (1) the range of skills and situations of which young people should be given the opportunity to gain experience; (2) how their learning from these experiences should be supported and directed; and (3) what procedures should be adopted by sponsors' staff, careers officers and MSC area staff to ensure that the maximum benefit would be obtained from the opportunities available.⁽⁹⁾

In the context of this account, it is not necessary to examine the specific guidelines in each of these areas. Rather, it is sufficient to draw attention to certain specific developments upon which depended the whole framework of principles and guidelines outlined in Making Experience Work. First, there was the need for a massive expansion of off-the-job training and further education provision associated with work experience schemes, so that eventually it would be possible to offer this opportunity to every work experience trainee. Each of the three principles, and in particular the third, depended upon this development, as did individual guidelines in each of the three main areas. The second necessary development was that of an adequate system for the training and continuing support of scheme staff. The third was the institution and maintenance of the regular monitoring of schemes. Both of these latter two developments were covered by a single procedural guideline in Making Experience Work.⁽¹⁰⁾ However, upon this one procedural guideline depended the successful implementation of all the other guidelines which aimed at raising the quality of learning opportunities offered to trainees as an integral element of work experience.

When the Review of the First Year of Special Programmes reported upon the initiatives which had been taken to improve the quality of YOP, it highlighted four areas of activity. One of these was the work of advisory groups, under which heading was included a brief report on the work of the PROFILE task group. Alongside this was mentioned the development work being done in collaboration with PROFILE by the Further Education Curriculum Unit (F.E.U.) on life and social skills training, and by the Basic Skills Unit at the National Extension College on the teaching of basic skills. Also there were the specialist teams which had been set up to advise upon provision for various groups of young people, such as the disabled and those from ethnic minorities, who were considered to have special needs.⁽¹¹⁾ The other three areas of activity highlighted in the Review reflected the general approach to quality improvement advocated by the PROFILE group. Thus, the three areas were off-the-job learning, the training of sponsors' staff and the monitoring of schemes⁽¹²⁾ - those which have been analysed above as being the necessary areas of development for the implementation of the principles and guidelines set out in Making Experience Work.

For each of these three areas of quality improvement, the Review provided a simple quantitative gauge of performance. Unfortunately, as subsequent Reviews became increasingly brief and sketchy, they often neglected to provide comparable figures, and it was not always possible to obtain them from other sources. Nevertheless, using these quantitative gauges when available, and supplementing them as necessary with other forms of information, it is possible to trace the development of these three areas of quality improvement throughout most of the history of the programme. By this means, some initial assessment can be made of the performance of YOP in relation to its original qualitative objectives.

3. Off-the-Job Training

The quantitative gauge provided for the programme's performance in the area of off-the-job training was simply the percentage figure for the number of work experience trainees who were receiving this provision. During the latter quarter of each of the first four financial years of the programme, a postal survey was made of a sample of trainees who had entered work experience schemes in the month of January.⁽¹³⁾ The results of these surveys are set out in Table 11.⁽¹⁴⁾ The questions asked in the 1981 and 1982 surveys were not exactly the same as those asked in the two previous years, and thus the results are not strictly comparable. In the two latter years, it was asked whether trainees had been offered off-the-job training as well as whether they had actually attended it. From the percentage figures given by the surveys, which were weighted to take account of each year's distribution of entrants between the various types of work experience scheme, it was possible to make an estimate of the total number work experience trainees who had received off-the-job training during each of the four years.

It will be remembered that the opportunity to attend off-the-job training had been one of the four required elements of content of the Work Experience Programme. It was estimated that approximately 25% of WEP trainees received this provision, principally in the form of social and life skills training.⁽¹⁵⁾ This figure was regarded as unsatisfactory and, as we have seen, it was expected that there should be a considerable improvement with YOP. When the results of the 1979 further education survey were published in the Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, they indicated that the figure for all work experience trainees at this early stage of YOP was roughly the same. However, this result had not been weighted to take account of the large preponderance of WEEP scheme entrants. In this first survey, as in each of the three others, it was revealed that the

TABLE 11 WORK EXPERIENCE TRAINEES RECEIVING OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING

		1978/79	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82
Trainees Attending	Percentage	17%	35%	22%	26%
	Estimated Annual Nos.	22,000	63,000	67,000	119,000
Trainees Offered	Percentage			28%	33%
	Estimated Annual Nos.			85,000	154,000
Acceptance Rate	Percentage			78%	77%

proportion of WEEP trainees receiving off-the-job training was considerably lower than the proportion of trainees at other types of work experience scheme.⁽¹⁶⁾ Thus, when subsequently the results were weighted to take account of the preponderance of WEEP, the figure for all work experience trainees had to be revised down to 17%, which was one third less than that achieved by WEP.

The second year saw a marked improvement. The percentage receiving off-the-job training more than doubled, and the number of trainees which this was estimated to represent more than trebled. However, this was only a temporary improvement. In the third year, when there was a massive increase in the number of entrants to the programme, there appears to have been only a slight increase in the volume of off-the-job training, with the result that the percentage figure for those attending fell back by over a third. Finally, the fourth year saw a modest improvement in the percentage figure, taking it back over the 25% level. Given the continued rapid rise in the number of entrants, this represented a substantial increase in the scale of provision. The figures available in the last two years for those being offered the opportunity of off-the-job training, as opposed to actually attending, reveal that the acceptance rate of such offers was just over three-quarters. This was thought to demonstrate that there was less resistance amongst trainees to this form of provision than was commonly believed to be the case.⁽¹⁷⁾ However, by the same token, it meant that the numbers being offered off-the-job training were not as large as might have been expected in relation to the numbers actually attending.

In short, what Table 11 shows is that, measured in terms of the proportion of work experience trainees who actually received off-the-job training, YOP failed to make any improvement upon the performance of the Work Experience Programme. Thus, at the end

of the fourth year, only just over a quarter of all YOP work experience trainees were attending any form of off-the-job training. Moreover, this was also the overall proportion out of the total number of work experience entrants over the whole four year period. Assuming that the acceptance rate was the same in the first two years as in the latter two years, the overall figure for those being offered off-the-job training would have been roughly a third. Thus, it can be concluded that over the first four years of YOP approximately two-thirds of the total number of work experience entrants were not even given the opportunity to attend off-the-job training.

Of course, the assessment of this aspect of quality improvement cannot be wholly reduced to this simple quantitative gauge. There is also the question of what actually happened during the off-the-job training that was available, and how it contributed to the overall value of the work experience schemes with which it was associated. This, however, will be left for consideration in the course of the local case study which is to follow below. Here it is sufficient to note that, for the vast majority of work experience trainees on YOP, such questions were simply irrelevant, because they did not receive any form of off-the-job training. Yet, as we have seen, one of the underlying principles of the approach to quality improvement advocated in Making Experience Work was that on-the-job and off-the-job experience were of equal importance and should be mutually reinforcing. It is clear from Table 11 that this principle, and the other principles and guidelines which were closely related to it, were never really put into practice. As a result, the whole approach to quality improvement developed by the PROFILE group was seriously undermined.

However, it can be argued (and indeed was argued) that Making Experience Work placed too much emphasis on the role of off-the-job training. As will be seen later, there were

many difficulties involved in its co-ordination with the various work experience schemes, and serious doubts can be raised about the contribution that it made to their overall quality development. Given these doubts, it is arguable that the lack of off-the-job training available in fact made little difference to the achievement of real quality improvement. However, if the role of off-the-job training is to be written off in this way, it makes all the more important the role of those factors which have previously been identified as the necessary preconditions for the improvement of quality and the development of training content within the work experience schemes themselves. This brings us back to the training of sponsors' staff and the monitoring of schemes.

4. The Training of Sponsors' Staff

The importance of training the adults who were to act as the trainers and supervisors on the various schemes had been recognised in the Holland Report. It was explicitly stated that the programme would not work unless this training was properly done.⁽¹⁸⁾ Looking forward to the implementation of the programme, the Report had estimated that the capacity existed to produce 1,800 or more trained instructors by September 1978.⁽¹⁹⁾ In fact, when the Review of the First Year of Special Programmes reported on the training of sponsors' staff as a gauge of quality improvement, it revealed that the number trained in the first year of YOP had been a mere 600.⁽²⁰⁾ This can partially be accounted for by the fact that the Holland Report had envisaged that the majority of those being trained initially would be staff for the Employment Induction Courses. As we have seen, EICs were mounted on only a fraction of the scale originally intended; as a result, far fewer staff needed training in order to run them. However, the figure of 600 was still disappointing when compared to the volume of unemployed adults that had been taken on by other schemes and were in need of training. Thus, by the end of the first year, there were more than 3,000 adult staff employed by the sponsors of Training Workshops, Project Based Work Experience and Community Service.⁽²¹⁾ Priority was originally given to the Training Workshop supervisors. For those who received the training, it consisted of a two week course which was run by TSD Instructor Training College Tutors. This included the development of teaching technique and the consideration of the social skills required by young people to obtain and keep employment. The Review also mentioned that new approaches to sponsors' staff training were being piloted in conjunction with the City and Guilds of London Institute. (C.G.L.I.).⁽²²⁾

The second year of YOP saw an increase to 1,500 in the number of supervisors and instructors trained by the MSC. Of these, 250 had gone through the joint MSC/CGLI pilot courses, which combined elements of off-the-job general training with on-the-job assessment leading to the award of a special City and Guilds certificate, the 'Instructor/Supervisor Award'.⁽²³⁾ However, the numbers involved were still small compared with the volume of those who were in need of such training. Thus, a postal survey which was carried out mid-way through this second year revealed that only 24% of YOP adult employees had received MSC training for their present jobs.⁽²⁴⁾

In April 1980, at the beginning of the third year of YOP, there was an important new initiative concerning the training of sponsor's staff. This involved the MSC training provision being re-organised on the basis of a three tier structure.⁽²⁵⁾ Tier I consisted of short induction courses of up to 40 hours length, which were usually taken in the form of a single week-long block. These provided an introduction to the aims and organisation of the MSC and its Special Programmes Division, and also touched upon various aspects of working with young people, instructional and communication skills, and health and safety legislation. All staff directly involved in YOP were eligible to attend these Tier I courses. This included WEEP staff, who were also eligible to attend Tier II training. However, it was realised that only a very small proportion were likely to be released by their employers for such training.⁽²⁸⁾ In contrast, for all non-WEEP work experience supervisors, Tier I was made a mandatory requirement.

Tier II consisted of training courses of up to 40 hours in length, which were directed primarily at YOP scheme supervisors.

The main areas of responsibility which they covered were the supervision of young people, instructional skills, advice and guidance, and the provision of social and life skills. This training was mandatory only for the supervisors in Training Workshops. A further 10 hours of on-the-job performance assessment could be provided if required.

Finally, Tier III consisted of more specialised training going beyond the standardised provision of Tiers I and II. Three broad areas were covered: (1) training for specific jobs (for example, finance, marketing, first aid); (2) training for working with specific kinds of trainee (for example, the handicapped); and (3) training to meet specific employee needs (for example, refresher courses in particular skills). Staff from all forms of work experience schemes were eligible to receive this training. However, tuition and other costs had to be met in full from agreed scheme budgets, or in the case of WEEP schemes by the sponsor him/herself.

The provision of this new three tier system of sponsors' staff training was organised at a regional level, and for this purpose the post of Regional Training Resource Manager was created. The job entailed working in conjunction with area office staff to develop and monitor comprehensive local training facilities within travelling distance of all schemes. Meanwhile, separate specific training continued to be provided for the small number of staff who were responsible for Employment Induction Courses. Finally, the joint MSC/CGLI courses, which had been successfully piloted at nine colleges, continued to be run at these locations and were given the capacity to expand elsewhere if the demand existed.

This major new initiative in the training of sponsors' staff was announced publicly in the Review of the Second Year of

Special Programmes . However, at the end of its first year of operation, no mention was made of it in the next year's Review. Indeed, the section on quality improvement said nothing whatsoever about the training of sponsors' staff.⁽²⁷⁾ No figures were given, and there was no indication as to whether the 'mandatory' Tier I and Tier II training of supervisors had been carried out. In fact, the only indication was provided by the silence itself, which we have seen used before as the means of avoiding an admission of failure to fulfil a public undertaking.

The Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes was far more helpful in this regard. Not only did it publish figures for the training of sponsors' staff during 1981/82; but, in order to demonstrate the progress that these represented, it also gave a figure for the previous year.⁽²⁸⁾ Thus, it revealed that in 1980/81 only 2,000 sponsors' staff had attended MSC training courses. It will be remembered that in the first year the figure was 600, and that in the second year it was 1,500, plus 250 on the joint MSC/CGLI pilot courses. Thus, by the end of the third year of YOP, a total of some 4,350 sponsors' staff had been on training courses, plus a certain 'unknown additional number who it must be assumed attended the continued joint MSC/CGLI courses in the third year. Yet, by this time, the number of adult staff employed on the non-WEOP work experience schemes had risen to 8,300.⁽²⁹⁾ Assuming that the ratio of supervisors to all forms of staff was approximately 5:8,⁽³⁰⁾ there would have been at least 5,000 for whom training was mandatory. Thus, even if an expansion of the MSC/CGLI courses is allowed for, the available evidence suggests that the total number of staff trained by the end of the third year of YOP was less than the number of those employed at that stage for whom such training was mandatory. Furthermore, this makes no allowance for staff turnover, which certain evidence indicated

as exceeding 50% per annum,⁽³¹⁾ or for those who had received more than one form of training. Our earlier 'reading' of the silence on this matter in the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes would appear to be confirmed.

The figures published in the following year's Review showed that nearly 6,000 sponsors' staff had attended MSC training courses during 1981/82.⁽³²⁾ Furthermore, almost another 2,000 had been catered for by the City and Guilds courses, which by then had been extended to 30 training centres. In the meantime, the total number of staff employed on the schemes had risen to 12,400, an increase of almost 50% on the figure at the end of the previous year. Assuming once again that roughly 5 in every 8 of these were supervisors, it is possible that the volume of training carried out during this fourth year was sufficient to clear the backlog of those for whom it was mandatory. However, it still must be considered that the total number of staff employed at the end of this fourth year was roughly the same as the total number who had been trained over the previous four years, and this again makes no allowance for the high rate of staff turnover or those receiving more than one form of training. Thus, from the evidence available, it would appear that at the beginning of the final year of YOP there was still a significant number of sponsors' staff who had not received any form of specific training for their duties within the programme.

In conclusion, I think that it can be said that the programme's performance in relation to this gauge of quality improvement was slightly more impressive than that in relation to the provision of off-the-job training. At least, by the beginning of the final year, it seems that the mandatory training of supervisors had been come to grips with. However, during the majority of the programme, many of the sponsors' staff had not received any form of MSC training; and it was only as the new

quality requirements of YTS loomed up, that the minimal requirements of YOP in this area were met. Also, as in the case of off-the-job training for work experience trainees, questions can be raised about the actual content of this provision and the effectiveness of its contribution to the overall quality of the programme. Again, this is something that will be examined more closely in the local case study. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to note here that, when asked in a national survey, the vast majority of staff who had received training said that it had been useful: (33) and that, in general, fewer doubts were expressed about the efficacy of this provision.

A far more serious source of doubt about the contribution made by the sponsors' staff training programme to the overall quality of YOP arises from the fact that this provision appears to have had a negligible effect upon WEEP scheme staff. The totals given above for the number of sponsors' staff have not included those on WEEP schemes who were designated as the adults responsible for the supervision of the trainees on these schemes. These staff were eligible for MSC training, but as we have seen their employers had to release them at their own expense. There was no real encouragement for private employers to do this, and there is no evidence to suggest that a significant number of WEEP scheme staff received MSC training. Furthermore, given that the majority of WEEP sponsors were small employers, it was unlikely that many of those responsible for the trainees would have had formal personnel training. Yet, it must be remembered that WEEP schemes constituted the vast majority of YOP's work experience provision, and two-thirds of the programme as a whole. If this aspect of quality improvement had a negligible effect upon WEEP scheme staff, then, whatever its success with staff elsewhere, it could only have had a marginal effect upon the quality of the programme as a whole. At this point it should also be remembered that WEEP trainees were the least likely to benefit from the limited opportunities

available for off-the-job training. Thus, the form of work experience provision which catered for two thirds of all YOP entrants appears to have been little affected by either of these first two key areas of quality improvement that have been examined. This leaves only monitoring to be considered.

5. Monitoring

The Holland Report had stated that monitoring and evaluating was essential for any programme, and especially important for YOP, given its partially experimental nature. The experience of JCP and WEP, it was said, had shown "the advantages of a carefully planned system of monitoring both projects and individuals, and the benefits of regular and comprehensive evaluation."⁽³⁴⁾ In the case of JCP, as we have already seen, this was certainly true - but principally in the negative sense of having demonstrated the pitfalls of inadequate monitoring and evaluation. Thus, a report made by the Comptroller and Auditor General had been highly critical of the monitoring and financial control systems operated by the MSC in relation to this programme.⁽³⁵⁾ It noted that because of staff shortages substantially fewer monitoring visits had been made to projects than had been intended, and that some projects had been completed without being visited at all. When questioned about these matters by the Parliamentary Accounts Committee, the Chairman and other representatives of the Commission stated that the problems had arisen from the rapid and piecemeal expansion of what had originally been introduced as a relatively small and temporary programme. They did not think that the two new special programmes (YOP and STEP) would suffer from the same problems because both were started on a semi-permanent basis and were not subject to piecemeal additions as JCP had been. Moreover, an assurance was given that, as the pattern of monitoring required for the new programmes became clear, the necessary staff would be provided.⁽³⁶⁾ Likewise, in the Holland Report, it was stressed that monitoring and evaluation must be allowed for in the budgeting and staffing of YOP.⁽³⁷⁾

Naturally, the Public Accounts Committee emphasised the importance of regular monitoring as a means of financial control and ensuring the accountability of public spending. However, monitoring was equally important as a means of quality control and improvement. As we have seen, regular monitoring was one of the vital procedural guidelines referred to in the PROFILE report and Making Experience Work, and it was also one of the three gauges of quality improvement established in the Review of the First Year of Special Programmes. Thus, the objectives of monitoring combined the needs of public accountability and quality control. On the one hand, visits were made to check upon the management structures and financial procedures of the schemes.⁽³⁸⁾ On the other hand, they were made to ensure that sponsors were providing the agreed minimum elements of content and to encourage them to make improvements. A further objective was to check upon the progress of individual trainees.⁽³⁹⁾ In this account, our concern is primarily with monitoring in relation to quality control and improvement. However, this aspect cannot be wholly separated from that of public accountability, since, if schemes were failing to meet the agreed quality requirements, their spending of public money was obviously in some respect unaccountable.

The monitoring arrangements for YOP and STEP were introduced in October 1978.⁽⁴⁰⁾ The frequency and pattern of the visits, which were primarily the responsibility of SPD Area Office Staff, depended upon the type of scheme concerned. WEEP schemes were to be visited within three months of their start, and then subsequently at four monthly intervals. The other forms of work experience scheme, which involved larger amounts of money and more complex management, were deemed to require more intensive monitoring (as were the STEP projects). The first visit was to be made within one month of the start of the scheme,

and the second within three months of the start. Thereafter, visits were to be made at intervals of not more than three months. These were the minimum frequencies, and it was left to the discretion of Area Managers to increase them if thought necessary or desirable. These arrangements did not include the work preparation side of YOP, the monitoring of which remained primarily the responsibility of local TSD staff.⁽⁴¹⁾ The account which follows is concerned only with SPD's monitoring of work experience schemes within YOP. More will be said about the TSD's monitoring of work preparation courses in the local case study.

The monitoring visits undertaken by local SPD staff were recorded by means of a system of monthly returns made to Regional and Head Office. These showed not only the total number of visits made, but also whether the schemes had been found to be very good, satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The Review of the First Year of Special Programmes revealed that by the first half of 1979 visits were being carried out at a rate of well over 4000 per month, and that very few of them were proving to be unsatisfactory. However, it was acknowledged that this rate of visits was not yet high enough, and it was said that efforts were being made to increase it.⁽⁴²⁾ In fact, during this first year, there was a considerable arrears in the scheduled monitoring, and the rate of 4,000 visits per month was still less than half of that which was required. By March 1979, roughly 40,000 WEEP schemes had been set up, plus 1,250 other work experience schemes.⁽⁴³⁾ In order to maintain the specified regular frequency of monitoring for this number of schemes it would have required a rate of more than 10,000 visits per month, and this figure makes no allowance for the extra frequency of visits required for any new schemes.

The shortfall in monitoring visits during the first year of YOP was noted in the Comptroller and Auditor General's Report on Manpower Services Commission Accounts 1978-79, which was scrutinised by the Public Accounts Committee in June 1980. Also noted was the fact that the MSC's own auditors had expressed doubts about the effectiveness of the monitoring being carried out by certain of the Area Officers. The MSC admitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General that they had been concerned about the unsatisfactory monitoring position of June 1979, but reassured him that since then the situation had been transformed. Revised guidelines had been issued to Area Officers, focussing attention on schemes in most need of guidance and control, and over the following four months the number of monitoring visits had been increased from 4,000 to 7,000 a month. This left a total of 8,352 visits, or just over one month's work still outstanding at the end of October 1979. The problems raised concerning the effectiveness of the monitoring carried out during the first year were attributed largely to the inexperience of many of the staff at the Area Offices. Performance was expected to improve as they gained more experience, and priority was being given to the consolidation of instructions and to additional staff training. (44)

The improvements made following June 1979 were reflected in the results published by the Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes. Here it was stated that "regular monitoring of schemes became a reality during the year." (45) In total, 87,000 monitoring visits were made, 73,000 of which proved to be satisfactory or very satisfactory. This was said to represent an average frequency for all types of scheme of a visit roughly once every four months. However, given that some 40,000 schemes were already in existence at the beginning of the year, it is hard to see how such a figure was arrived at.

Whatever doubts there may be about the actual frequency of monitoring visits during this second year of YOP, there can be little doubt that it was the year in which regular monitoring of schemes came nearest to being a reality. The Reviews of Special Programmes in subsequent years made no direct reference to the frequency of monitoring, but we have already seen how such silences are to be interpreted. Moreover, a clear picture of what actually happened can be pieced together from a number of other sources.

First, documents which were presented to the Special Programmes Board during 1980 reveal how staff cuts imposed by the new Conservative Government led to a reduction in the scheduled frequency of monitoring visits. Initially, a 2.8% staff cut was imposed, which meant the loss of some 35 posts in the SPD Area Offices. This was achieved, without affecting the overall size of the programme, by a reduction in routine WEEP monitoring visits. Thus, from July 1980 onwards, these schemes were to be visited once in the first 3 months, and thereafter at 6 monthly intervals.

Subsequently, the SPD was to be protected from the further staff cuts which were imposed on the MSC as a whole, and its initial staffing levels were restored and then substantially increased. Thus, in November 1980, another paper which was presented to the Special Programmes Board referred to 160 extra posts being distributed amongst the SPD Area Offices. However, this did not allow for any increase in the frequency of monitoring visits, since at the same time the scale of the programme was expending at a considerably faster rate. Thus, during the third year, the number of schemes almost doubled to approximately 140,000. A large proportion of available staff time had to be spent simply generating and approving the huge number of new schemes that were required. Consequently, even with the staff increases, the maintenance of the scheduled frequency of monitoring visits became increasingly difficult.

By the beginning of the fourth year, the pressure of the ever-increasing scale of provision had made necessary a major review of monitoring procedures. A paper presented to the Special Programmes Board stated that, with the limited numbers of staff available, it was no longer possible to maintain a comprehensive system of monitoring, without the accumulation of substantial arrears. This being the case, it was argued that it would be more efficient to introduce a selectively-targetted system. This would concentrate on the schemes involving the largest sums of money, and on those where it was thought that there was the greatest risk of mismanagement or abuse. The original plan was to maintain 100% coverage on Training Workshops, to vary the frequency of visits to Community Projects according to their individual circumstances, and to adopt a random sampling approach to cater for the vast number of WEEP schemes. However, the random sampling approach was never fully implemented, and instead, it was attempted to regulate the frequency of WEEP monitoring by the introduction of a system of classification. New schemes being approved were to be classified either as 'good', 'satisfactory' or 'minimum acceptable standard'. The good would then have to be monitored within 18 months, the satisfactory within 12 months, and the minimum standard within 3 months. Meanwhile, the monitoring of existing schemes could be deferred and gradually integrated into the new system. In addition, there was still to be a small random sample of approximately 2½%.

When it is considered that originally all WEEP schemes were to be monitored once in their first 3 months and then regularly at 4 monthly intervals, it can be seen how much of a retreat was involved in the new regulations which were introduced in September 1981. However, the papers presented to the Special Programmes Board only told half the story. They only recorded the changes that were made in the system of monitoring; they did not record the actual performance of the SPD in relation

to this changing system. The full story was only to emerge when the Comptroller and Auditor General made another report for the Parliamentary Accounts Committee.

It will be remembered that the Parliamentary Accounts Committee had originally been critical of the monitoring of the Job Creation programme, and that the MSC had given an assurance that the necessary resources would be provided to ensure that the monitoring of YOP was of a higher standard. When next the Committee examined the situation in June 1980, it found that already in the first year of YOP there had been a considerable backlog in the monitoring schedule. However, once again it was reassured that things had now changed and that the backlog had almost been caught up. The third occasion on which it examined the issue was in February 1983, when it was presented by the Comptroller and Auditor General with a memorandum concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of all the special employment measures administered by the Department of Employment and the MSC.⁽⁴⁶⁾ It is worth quoting in full what the special appendix on YOP had to say about the MSC's performance of monitoring visits since the PAC's last examination of the subject:

"By 1980 monitoring visits to sponsors had increased to nearly 8,000 a month with only a small backlog. During the year following PAC's report the number of visits fell substantially and the backlog increased. In March 1981 MSC recognised the monitoring system had broken down under the pressure of programme expansion, especially in the case of WEEP. MSC abandoned some 40,000 outstanding visits in 1980-81 and concluded that, with the expansion of YOP to around 150,000 schemes, they would no longer maintain a comprehensive approach to monitoring. Instead they proposed to concentrate resources on schemes with aspects that were not wholly satisfactory. Despite this and the allocation of additional staff the backlog was not reduced. To overcome this problem MSC considered extending the frequency of visits but decided instead to adjust their definition of schemes requiring a visit. Even so, a backlog of over 30,000 visits remained at the end of October 1982."⁽⁴⁷⁾

The previous assurances concerning the adequate monitoring of YOP had been given personally by Sir Richard O'Brien in his capacity as the Chairman of the MSC. However, in the meantime he had been replaced, and thus it was the new Chairman, David Young, who had to answer to the Committee on these matters. He explained how his predecessor, faced by the massive increase in school leaver unemployment, had decided on the advice of his officials that the priority was to get the young people into schemes rather than to carry on detailed monitoring. Under such urgent circumstances, David Young acknowledged that he would have reacted in exactly the same way. However, more recently the situation had improved and monitoring was again 'very nearly up-to-date', with an overall average of only some 18,000 visits still outstanding. Moreover, he was confident that, with the experience gained from YOP, the new Youth Training Scheme would not encounter the same problems. Quality would be put before quantity, the number of staff would be increased, and the use of managing agencies would greatly reduce and simplify the task involved. (48)

Whatever credence one gives to David Young's excuses for his predecessor or to his assurances for the future, it is clear that the original assurances that were given concerning the monitoring of YOP were not upheld. The standards that were set for the frequency of monitoring visits were successively reduced; nevertheless, there were continuous backlogs which were never caught up, and which had eventually to be written off. Furthermore, the doubts which were raised, during the first year of the programme, about the effectiveness of the monitoring that was carried out were never adequately answered. What actually took place during monitoring visits will be examined more closely in the context of the local case study. Here it is sufficient to note that, however effective an individual visit might be, monitoring as a whole was unlikely to be effective if it was not maintained on a regular basis. (49)

At this point it should be recalled that the development of regular monitoring procedures was one of the three crucial aspects of the general approach to quality improvement that was originally adopted for YOP. Now it can be seen that, as with off-the-job training and the training of sponsors' staff, this third aspect of quality improvement also failed to keep pace with the quantitative growth of the programme. Moreover, as was the case in relation to the other two aspects, it was the WEEP schemes that fared worst in relation to monitoring. Thus, the scheme-type which provided places for 2 out of every 3 YOP trainees offered the least opportunity for off-the-job training, had negligible staff training, and was by far the most irregularly monitored. In the context of YOP, it would appear that quality and quantity came together like oil and water.

6. Substitution and Displacement

The substantial failure of the original approach adopted to quality improvement, combined with the massive quantitative growth of the programme, had serious implications for the way in which YOP was understood and justified in the wider context of the MSC's philosophy of manpower policy. However, before discussing these implications, it is necessary to analyse one further topic, that of substitution and displacement. It will be remembered that these terms were defined in the Holland Report, and that it was recognised, in particular, that the abuse of substitution on WEEP schemes could pose a serious threat to the normal workings of the labour market.⁽⁵⁰⁾ This issue was raised in the context of the discussion concerning the scale on which the new programme should be mounted. Obviously, the larger and more comprehensive the programme became, the greater was the potential for adverse interference with the labour market. However, the issue can also be understood in close relation to the qualitative development of the programme, but in this case the relation is inverse. Thus, it was generally regarded that the development of the various aspects of quality improvement, and in particular that of monitoring, provided the most effective check upon possible abuses. Yet, we have already seen that in the part of YOP where the threat of substitution was greatest - the WEEP sector - none of the aspects of quality improvement made much impact, including that of monitoring. It now remains to be seen what positive evidence there was of substitution and displacement causing labour market interference, particularly as the programme grew in scale.

The principle means by which the MSC sought to establish the extent of YOP's interference with the labour market was simply

through asking sponsors why they were taking part in the programme, how they were using the trainees and whether it was affecting their normal recruitment of staff. Three surveys of sponsors were carried out on behalf of the MSC, one in September 1978, one in January 1980, and another approximately a year later. The first of these was restricted to WEEP sponsors, all of whom had previously been involved in the Work Experience Programme before it was incorporated into YOP. A brief reference was made to its results in the Review of the First Year of Special Programmes.⁽⁵¹⁾ The second survey covered all work experience sponsors (as well as those in STEP), and its results were discussed in greater detail in the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes.⁽⁵²⁾ Finally, the third survey which was similar to the second, was given a brief mention in the next year's Review.⁽⁵³⁾

The account of the 1978 survey which was published in the annual review merely stated on the question of substitution that the employers' answers had implied that some trainees may have been taking the place of people who would have formed part of the permanent staff. Against this was set the fact that the survey also suggested that these work experience schemes were making certain additional jobs available to young people. Thus, roughly a third of the trainees were recruited by their sponsors, and of these, about a quarter went into jobs which it was said would not otherwise have been filled. What was not published in the review was the fact that, compared to the 1 in 12 sponsors who claimed to have created additional jobs for YOP trainees, 1 in 5 admitted that they would have had to employ permanent employees had they not operated a work experience scheme. Moreover, 30 per cent acknowledged that the scheme had provided an opportunity to screen young people as recruits and 34 per cent that it had provided an extra pair of hands.⁽⁵⁴⁾

Although not published in the Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, this more detailed evidence of the scale of substitution associated with WEEP schemes was raised as a matter of concern in the context of the Special Programmes Board. A paper was presented to the Board which attempted to analyse the overall effects of special programmes on the labour market.⁽⁵⁵⁾ The main consequences of substitution and displacement were identified as follows:

"(i) The burden of unemployment will be distributed from one group to another or even between different members of the same group; for example, young peoples' unemployment may be reduced at the expense of an increase in unemployment among older employees.

(ii) The net effect of the programmes on the unemployment register will be less than that indicated by the gross numbers supported by the measures.

(iii) The net costs of running special programmes will increase, because unemployment benefits have to be paid to those who have been substituted or displaced by the programme, and tax revenues that would have accrued had these individuals been in employment will be lost."⁽⁵⁶⁾

The only evidence with regard to displacement came from a survey of Job Creation Programme sponsors, and this suggested that it was not a significant problem. However, it was noted that a certain proportion of JCP projects would have been financed anyway, and it was estimated that in terms of numbers employed, this represented an 8% substitution rate. Already we have seen that the 1978 survey of WEP/WEEP sponsors suggested that these schemes were subject to a 20% substitution rate. The paper concluded that the net effects of these provisions on the unemployment register would be lower by these percentages in relation to the gross numbers involved, and that their net costs could be correspondingly higher.

As far as the redistribution of unemployment was concerned, it was noted in relation to the survey of WEP/WEED sponsors that three-quarters of the permanent staff substituted for by YOP trainees would have been young people. Moreover, although 'additional' jobs were made available to 15 out of every 100 trainees at the end of their schemes, approximately half of these were at the expense of jobs which otherwise would have been available to adults. From these facts, it would appear that the immediate effects of these schemes were to destroy as many permanent job opportunities for young people as they created; and, in the process, to remove up to 13 adult job opportunities for every 100 trainees going through the system. However, this conclusion was not explicitly drawn in the paper concerned.

As well as analysing the existing evidence of substitution and displacement, and considering its implications, this Special Programmes Board paper also set out a programme of further research into these problems. Two projects were to be set in hand. The first was to be another survey of sponsors, which this time would include all the different types of work experience scheme within YOP. The second was to be a case study analysis specifically of WEED schemes. This was thought necessary because it was recognised that an interview survey, which simply asked sponsors whether schemes were affecting their recruitment of permanent employees, was "a relatively blunt instrument for identifying complicated adjustments which take place over time."⁽⁵⁷⁾ The case studies would observe what the WEED trainees actually did and investigate how this work would have been done in the past. They would also scrutinise the relationship between normal company training programmes and WEED schemes; and finally, they would follow the progress of those trainees who entered into permanent employment with scheme sponsors. In addition to these two projects, it was also suggested that a limited attempt should be made to examine the impact of displacement in the local labour market beyond the sponsor's own organisation, and to

identify the longer term redistribution of employment opportunities in favour of former special programmes participants.

As far as this observer is aware, the only part of this research programme ever carried out was the second survey of sponsors, the results of which were discussed at some length in the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes.

Certainly, if any of the other parts were implemented, no similar effort was made to publicise their results. By the end of the third year of YOP, substitution had become an issue of public concern, with allegations being made in the press and by certain trade unionists. The annual Review pointed out that such allegations were easier to make than to prove, and attempted to use the results of the January 1980 survey of sponsors to show that the problem was not as widespread as some were alledging.⁽⁵⁸⁾ First, it was noted that such abuse was largely confined to WEEP schemes, no evidence having been found of substitution taking place on an appreciable scale at the other types of work experience scheme.⁽⁵⁹⁾ Secondly, with regard to substitution on WEEP schemes, it was explained that this could take a number of forms. As we have already seen, YOP trainees could either be substituted for adult employees or the recruitment of young people. In the latter case, which was sometimes referred to as 'dead weight', there were two further alternatives. Either the employers might use the scheme as a subsidised training or screening period for potential young employees, or - and this was regarded as being far more serious - they might use it to replace recruitment altogether by taking on a regular succession of trainees instead.⁽⁶⁰⁾ The results of the survey, however, were unable to distinguish between these latter two alternatives. They simply revealed that in total 24% of WEEP trainees had been used to substitute for the recruitment of other young people, and that a further 5% had been used instead of adult employees. In mitigation, it was implied that a substantial

proportion of the first figure might have been constituted by the least serious of the two alternative forms of abuse that it covered. Furthermore, set against these figures for substitution, were the findings of the survey with regard to the number of additional job opportunities which it was reckoned had been created as a result of these schemes. Thus, it was estimated that for every 100 trainees going through WEEP approximately 11 additional jobs were provided for young people; six of which would otherwise have been filled by adults, and five of which were created especially to enable the trainees to be kept on.

The publication of these results did little to quell the public's anxiety about the abuse of YOP, and to a large extent merely fuelled further criticisms. Some of these were ill-informed, neglecting the distinction between the WEEP sector and YOP as a whole, and therefore assuming that a 30% substitution rate had been revealed for the programme as a whole. Nevertheless, there were legitimate grounds for both anxiety and criticism. Even if it was assumed that abuse was confined to the various forms of substitution on WEEP schemes, the evidence was that at least 20% of all YOP placements involved some form of abuse. Furthermore, there had been a substantial increase in the rate of substitution since the previous survey from 20% to 29% of all WEEP schemes. This suggested that abuse became more frequent, either as existing schemes were repeated, or as the total number of schemes was increased. The growth in the rate of substitution was completely at the expense of the recruitment of other young people, the figure for the substitution of adults remaining static at 5%. At the same time, the rate of the provision of additional jobs for young people had declined from 15% to 11%. Thus, whereas on the evidence of the 1978 survey WEEP schemes created roughly as many jobs for young people as they destroyed, in the 1980 survey, the rate of substitution of young people's jobs was more than double their rate of additional provision.

As well as drawing such implications from the figures provided, it is possible to cast serious doubts about their validity as a true measure of the scale of abuse which was actually taking place. We have already seen it acknowledged that the interview survey was "a relatively blunt instrument" for identifying the complexity of what might be taking place over time on a WEEP scheme. Consequently, it was suggested that this approach should be supplemented by the use of detailed case studies. However, these do not appear to have been carried out, and the results of the interview survey were presented on their own as the only available measure of the rate of substitution. Yet these results were obtained simply by asking sponsors if they would have taken on more permanent employees had their WEEP trainees not been available. Given that in the first place it was a condition of approval that schemes should not affect normal recruitment, what in effect sponsors were being asked - and not in a particularly subtle or devious way - was whether they had broken their agreement with the MSC and were abusing their schemes. Admittedly the questions were not being asked directly by the MSC,⁽⁶¹⁾ but still there must be considerable doubt as to whether the sponsors' answers can be regarded as a reliable measure of the actual level of abuse. An equivalent situation might be the Inland Revenue or the DHSS hiring an independent research agency to ask a sample of tax payers or social security claimants whether they had any undeclared sources of income. Would this be regarded as a reliable measure of the level of abuse taking place in this context? Of course not, it is simply not credible to measure the level of abuse within a system just by asking people whether they are abusing it. In fact, what must be considered remarkable is that so many sponsors admitted that they were abusing their schemes. Perhaps this is an indication that many did not fully understand the conditions which they had agreed to. Whatever the case, it must be asked, if 29% admitted that their schemes involved substitution, how many more were there who did not admit what they were really doing?

The results published in the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes were based on the responses of WEEP sponsors to the direct question of whether involvement in YOP had affected their recruitment of permanent employees. However, the survey also included certain other questions which attempted to elicit information concerning the prevalence of substitution by slightly less direct means. Results based on the responses to these questions were presented to the Special Programmes Board in November 1980, as part of a more detailed report on the findings of the survey. These results can be summarised as follows: (1) when asked about their reasons for becoming sponsors, 18% of the respondents gave as their sole reason the prospect of obtaining extra help and/or cheap extra employees, and a further 6% said that a factor in their decision was that they had existing vacancies for part-time or casual staff; (2) 54% of sponsors said that they had used WEEP as a means of screening applicants before taking them into permanent jobs; (3) when asked what the advantages were in running a WEEP scheme, 37% of sponsors mentioned the availability of an extra pair of hands, 36% said that the scheme gave them a chance to assess young people and 14% considered it to be a cheap means of training; (4) 41% of sponsors identified "doing work similar to that done by permanent employees" as the single main activity of their trainees and 30% said that their trainees spent more than four-fifths of their time doing this type of work. Clearly, each of these results was indicative of a certain amount of substitution taking place. However, there is no way in which they can be used either to support or to deny the precise percentage figure derived from the direct question on substitution. The report merely stated that the two sets of results were 'consistent'. Given that they could not be directly related to each other, it would perhaps have been more accurate to say that they were 'not inconsistent'. Moreover, even if they

could have been directly related to each other, the same doubts which have been raised about the sponsors' honesty in response to the direct question on substitution could be applied almost equally in the case of the answers to these more indirect questions. They were still not particularly subtle questions, and it must be considered, for example, that some employers who became sponsors merely in order to obtain cheap labour might have preferred not to admit this in response to a survey.

The results of the third survey of sponsors, which was carried out in May 1981, were mentioned very briefly in the Review of the Fourth Year of Special Programmes. Here the impression was given that they had simply confirmed those of the second survey. Thus, it was reported that the evidence indicated abuse taking place in "about 30%" of WEEP placements. In fact, the results of the third survey with regard to the crucial direct question on substitution were very different from those of the second survey. A more detailed report, which was presented to the Special Programmes Board in November 1981, revealed that in the third survey only 15% of sponsors admitted that they would have taken on more permanent employees if their WEEP trainees had not been available. Moreover, because this 15% consisted mainly of the sponsors of small schemes, the proportion of places affected was only 7% of the total compared with 29% in the 1980 survey. Yet, meanwhile, the results obtained from the other less direct questions had remained substantially unchanged. The conclusion drawn in the report from this contradictory evidence was that there had probably been little change in the rate of abuse between the two surveys. The sharp drop indicated by the results of the direct question on substitution was considered most unlikely to have actually taken place; rather, it was thought that sponsors were now being less frank in their responses to this question, possibly because of the increased press coverage being given to the issue of substitution. Consequently, it was deemed that

the results of the direct question should be overridden by the other evidence which indicated that there had been little change in the rate of abuse. Hence the figure of 'about 30%' published in the Annual Review.

It might be thought that in this instance the MSC was given its critics the benefit of the doubt. However, if the Review had published the figure of 7%, this would have been completely unbelievable and would merely have exposed the unreliability of this whole method of measuring substitution. It would have been obvious that some sponsors must have lied in their responses to this latest survey, and this would have raised questions about their honesty in previous surveys. If 7% was unbelievable, why should 29% be believed, given that it had been obtained in exactly the same way? The results of the indirect questions were useful in so far as they indicated that most probably there had been little change in the situation between the 1980 and 1981 surveys. However, they provided no evidence to suggest that the rate of abuse was about 30% at either the beginning or the end of this period of time. What the results of the two surveys together demonstrated was precisely that there was no direct relationship between sponsors' answers to the direct and indirect questions on substitution. The results based on the indirect questions appear to have been more reliable but this does not eliminate the possibility that some sponsors were dishonest in their answers to these questions, and nor does it prove how many were lying in response to the direct question.

The report in the Annual Review, to the effect that the 1981 survey of sponsors had shown the rate of abuse remaining roughly the same at 'about 30%', was the easiest way for the MSC to avoid stirring up any new controversy, while still appearing to be closely monitoring the situation. However, it

can now be seen that this report was not strictly true. The survey did provide some indication that there had been little change since the previous survey, but at the same time it showed that the method by which this previous survey had established the rate of abuse at 29% was totally unreliable. This returns us to the question of how many more sponsors were abusing their schemes than the proportion who were prepared to admit it in such surveys. Certain evidence provided by the local case study below will suggest that the 29% was merely the tip of the iceberg. However, this evidence falls well short of proof. As the MSC were always keen to point out, allegations of abuse are easier to make than to prove. Yet, this works both ways. As we have now seen the MSC themselves had no reliable means of proving what the actual rate of substitution was. Their surveys merely revealed that, before substitution was raised as an issue in the press, a surprisingly high proportion of sponsors were prepared to admit that they were abusing their schemes. This did nothing to disprove allegations that the rate of abuse was considerably higher; it simply established 'about 30%' as the minimum figure.

As well as publishing selectively the results of these surveys, the MSC attempted to quell public anxiety and criticism concerning abuses by emphasising the preventative measures which were being taken. These included: (1) stiffening the examination made of scheme proposals prior to giving approval; (2) seeking the explicit approval of trade unions where necessary, and involving Areas Boards more closely in the approval of schemes in sectors, such as agriculture, which had a bad reputation for abuse; (3) investigating all specific complaints and allegations of substitution, and in the cases where they were substantiated, terminating the schemes involved; and (4) continuing to make clear in public the Commission's resolve to tackle this abuse. (62) However, the most effective means of

preventing substitution was still said to be continued improvement of the quality of YOP. If sponsors had to meet more stringent qualitative requirements, it was thought that this would make abuse extremely difficult and discourage those who intended to use trainees merely as cheap labour.⁽⁶³⁾ This might seem slightly ironic, given that we have already seen the extent to which YOP, and in particular its WEEP sector, failed to meet the original objectives that were established for quality improvement. However, by the end of the third year of the programme, when these statements about the prevention of abuse were being made, quality improvement had begun to take on a new meaning and a new direction, as had the development of YOP as a whole.

7. Research and Development

During the first year of YOP, we have seen that the PROFILE working group played a central role in the development of the initial approach to quality improvement. The culmination of its work was the publication, in February 1979, of the principles and guidelines of Making Experience Work. The group continued to function afterwards, but only for about six months before it was disbanded. Although originally it had been given a wider brief, the attitude of the Director of Special Programmes was that PROFILE had served its purpose once it had produced this central framework document.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Thus, it was decided that the translation of these principles and guidelines into practice required not the perpetuation of a central co-ordinating group, but rather a diversification of numerous ad hoc specialist groups, each working on a defined and finite task, and dispersing when this task was completed.⁽⁶⁵⁾

This new approach involved not only the setting up of groups under the direct aegis of the MSC, but also the commissioning of outside organisations to carry out research and development work in certain specific areas. We have already seen, from the report on quality improvement in the Annual Review, that during the first year of YOP there were other initiatives taking place alongside the work of the PROFILE group. There were, for example, the specialist teams set up to advise on provision for the various groups of young people with special needs. Each of these produced a report during the second year of the programme, and all five reports were published together under the collective title of Special Programmes : Special Needs.⁽⁶⁶⁾ Also, it will be remembered, there was the work being undertaken by the F E U on the development of life and social skills training, and the project of the Basic Skills Unit at the National Extension College which was concerned with new

approaches to the teaching of basic skills. The outcome of the F E U's work was the publication in 1980 of two documents, Developing Social and Life Skills and Supporting YOP. The first of these set out strategies for F E tutors who were concerned with the design and implementation of social and life skills curricula for 16 - 19 year olds; the second contained more general advice for FE colleges and their staff on how they could contribute to the various components of YOP. Meanwhile, from the end of 1979 onwards, the Basic Skills Unit was producing and piloting a wide range of teaching materials for supervisors, tutors and young people in YOP. (67)

By the end of the second year of the programme certain other important initiatives were under way. These included : (1) the 'Grouping of Skills' study conducted by the MSC's Training Services Division; (2) the 'Learning at Work' development project which was carried out by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations; and (3) the development work on 'Trainee Centred Reviewing' undertaken jointly by the Industrial Training Research Unit at Cambridge and the Careers Development Unit at Leeds University. Each of these requires a brief explanation.

Research on the Grouping of Skills predated YOP and had in fact been initiated within the Training Services Agency as far back as 1975. (68) The original objective of this research was to develop a universal system of classification for describing and analysing the component elements of different jobs. However, it soon became evident that such a universal system could only operate at a relatively superficial level of description and analysis. Hence, there was a change of approach, moving away from abstract generalisation and towards the development of specific systems of classification designed to tackle specific real-life problems. One such problem, to which this new Grouping of Skills approach was to be directed, was the entry of school leavers into employment.

During 1978, two research projects were set up to analyse the skill requirements of jobs being entered by less qualified young people, and to test whether the information obtained could be of use in the design of YOP provision. The first of these was entitled 'Young People Starting Work', and was conducted by the Social and Applied Psychology Unit at the University of Sheffield with the assistance of the Leeds, Liverpool and Coventry LEAs, within whose areas the research was carried out.⁽⁶⁹⁾ The second, the 'London Into Work Development Project', was conducted jointly by the Ashridge Management College and the Training Directorate of the TSD, with the assistance of the ILEA.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Having established the jobs which were available to young people, the crucial task for both projects was to develop a 'job components inventory' which could be used to identify, describe and analyse the broad occupational skills required by these jobs. The starting point for this process of development was provided by inventories already in use in North America.⁽⁷¹⁾ These were made up of simple descriptors, which in questionnaire form could either be answered 'yes' or 'no', or else be given a numerical value. Both projects adapted these inventories to their own needs and then piloted them in questionnaire form. The London Into Work Project first grouped the jobs available into five broad families: Clerical, Sales, Transport, Services, Hands and Hand Tools, and Machines. It then attempted to analyse both the individual jobs and their families using a structured questionnaire containing over 300 broad-based skill descriptors, divided between the following categories: Basic Calculations, Measurement and Drawing, Listening and Talking, Reading, Writing, Planning and Problem Solving, and Machines. The information obtained made it possible to identify which skill descriptors occurred most widely throughout all of the jobs available, and to determine the characteristic skill profiles of the different job-families. This data was then available to be used in the design of Work Introduction Courses at various London Colleges. However, both the data, and the method by which it had been obtained, were capable of wider application.⁽⁷²⁾

The questionnaire which had been developed during the London Into Work project became known as the 'Basic Skills Checklist', and it was used as the starting point for another important research and development project coming under the general heading of the Grouping of Skills. This was the 'Phoenix Training Workshop Study' which was carried out by the TSD between January and August 1980.⁽⁷³⁾ The general purpose of this project was to test the usefulness of the Basic Skills Checklist as a means of analysing the activities of a Training Workshop. More specifically, the aim was to examine 'how information (obtained) about the kinds of basic skills used in the manufacture of Workshop products could be used to help Workshop Management select products and tailor training content to increase trainees' chances of getting a job.'⁽⁷⁴⁾ Thus, whereas the London Into Work Project used the Basic Skills Checklist to analyse the youth labour market, the Phoenix Training Workshop Study started from the opposite direction, using it to analyse a certain element of YOP provision.

The application of the Basic Skills Checklist to the Workshop was as follows. Initially, it was used to identify the basic skills used in each of the different sections of the Workshop. The skills thus identified were coded according to whether they were (a) prerequisite for entry to the section; (b) taught on the section; (c) optionally acquired on the section; or (d) exercised by the supervisor of the section. On the basis of this analysis, a Matrix of Basic Skills was produced for each section and for the Workshop as a whole. These matrices were then used to provide a record and analysis of the basic skills presently on offer at the Workshop. Furthermore, it was also possible to construct a Maximum Skills Matrix showing the full potential range of skills which each section could offer within its existing facilities. Two further applications of the Checklist related to the assessment of trainees upon entry to the

Workshop and to the monitoring of their subsequent progress. First, using the Overall Workshop Basic Skills Matrix, it was possible to identify and produce a profile of the skills which were prerequisite on entry to each of the sections. This profile could then be used during the induction phase as a basis for testing and recording the capacities of the new trainees. By this means, each new trainee could be provided with a personal 'can do' profile recording both their strengths and their needs. This information could then be used to help decide in which section they should be placed. Secondly, a Basic Skills Profile could be produced for each section, showing what it was possible for a trainee to learn within that section. This could then be used to record the trainee's achievement and their acquisition of particular skills. Finally, at the end of the scheme, the profiles of each of the sections through which a trainee had progressed could be collected together to provide them with a leaving profile to show prospective employers what they had learnt.

The final development which needs to be mentioned under the general heading of the Grouping of Skills is that of 'Occupational Training Families' (O.T.F.s). These were a more sophisticated version of the broad occupational families used by the London Into Work Development Project. Drawing on analyses using the Basic Skills Checklist, they grouped together occupations requiring similar initial skills training. The resulting system of classification included eleven different OTFs. The development of this system was the product of a pilot study conducted on behalf of the MSC by the Institute of Manpower Studies, a report on which was published in April 1981. (75)

The Learning at Work development project was concerned specifically with the learning opportunities that could be made available to young people whilst they were engaged in work experience. One of the criticisms made of the PROFILE taskgroup's general approach in Making Experience Work was that, in emphasising the

equal importance of off-the-job training, it tended to neglect the potential of on-the-job experience as a learning vehicle. Subsequently, it was recognised within the MSC that many of the guidelines set out in Making Experience Work might best be pursued through the development of this learning potential of on-the-job work experience. As a result, during the last six months of its existence, the PROFILE group was strongly encouraged to turn its attention in this direction. Then, with the demise of PROFILE, the Tavistock Institute was commissioned to carry out its development project on this theme.⁽⁷⁶⁾

Initially, the Learning at Work project analysed the learning opportunities being offered by a sample of 100 YOP schemes. It was concluded from this analysis that learning objectives were not being given the salience that a quality programme would require. Nevertheless, the data collected from the schemes served as a basis for the project to develop various quality improvement strategies. The end product was a guide to the principles and practice of providing learning opportunities for young people through work experience. This was published as part of the MSC's Special Programmes Research and Development Series in August 1982.⁽⁷⁷⁾ It should be noted first, that although this document set out to emphasise the potential of work-based learning, it also recognised that there were limitations in the extent to which a real working environment could be adapted in order to promote learning opportunities.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Consequently, it stressed that work experience placements should be used in conjunction with other forms of learning provision, thus reiterating what had been said in Making Experience Work. Having recognised the limitations of work-based learning, the guide set out to show how nevertheless such learning opportunities could be maximised. The first step was to identify precisely what kinds of learning opportunity might be available. The three main types of learning which could take place on work experience schemes were identified as follows: "learning basic competences

such as literacy, numeracy and communication; skill or vocational learning; and learning about the world of work, how workplaces operate and what is required of people at work." (79)

The need was for individual schemes to systematically analyse what they could offer under each heading. Once this analysis had been made, it could then be determined what complementary off-the-job training was required. Also, it could be specified what kind of young person would be best suited for the scheme. With regard to selection, the guide acknowledged that it was understandable that employers should use at least some of their normal selection criteria in cases where they were likely to keep the trainee on permanently at the end of the scheme. However, in cases where this was unlikely, it was stressed that selection should be on the basis of who would benefit most from what the scheme had to offer. This also required that trainees' needs and interests should be assessed in relation to the three main types of learning opportunity before they were placed on a scheme, as well as during induction and continuously thereafter. The work itself needed to be selected, organised and supervised in order to promote clearly defined learning objectives which had been agreed upon by the trainees. The following three features were regarded as important: (1) that there should be variety in the work, yet at the same time it should all be connected; (2) that goals should be set for the trainees and immediate feedback given on their performance; and (3) that the trainees should be given responsibility and allowed the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. The process of reviewing and recording progress was to be continuous throughout the scheme and was to involve actively the trainees. A final review was recommended for the last week, looking back on the experience of the scheme and preparing the trainees both to apply for jobs and, if necessary, to cope with unemployment.

The specific role of reviewing and recording trainee progress was examined in more detail by the project on Trainee Centred Reviewing.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The starting point for this was to be found directly within the guidelines of Making Experience Work. Here it was suggested that trainees would benefit if they 'logged' their experiences as they progressed through the various elements of a scheme. Furthermore, it was stated that they should be given the opportunity to contribute to a critical review of these experiences. The two units at Leeds University and Cambridge were asked initially by the MSC to review current practice in education and industry with regard to the use of personal progress records by young people, and to consider what benefits such records might have within YOP.⁽⁸¹⁾ The outcome of this first phase of the project was the development of the concept itself of 'Trainee Centred Reviewing' (T.C.R.).

The evidence collected concerning the use of personal progress record systems in schools had demonstrated the value of combining the process of recording with that of individual and group reviewing. This apparently helped the students to feel more valued and to take greater responsibility for their own learning. TCR described the application of this general approach within YOP. Essentially, it was a process by which trainees were encouraged both to discuss and record their experiences, and then to review more systematically what they could learn from them. As well as enhancing their experience of the scheme, it was believed that this could help the trainees to develop reviewing and learning skills which they could then take away with them at the end and apply to other situations. Although the processes of recording and reviewing were centred upon the trainee, it should be noted that there was still a vital role for adult support in providing both structure and motivation. Finally, it should also be noted that TCR did not lay down a single centrally designed system for all YOP schemes; rather it was a general approach which encouraged sponsors to develop their own systems of

recording and reviewing, "building upon their existing practices and recognising their individual differences and needs". (82) The second phase of the project tested the feasibility of this approach on a number of pilot schemes. This not only provided the opportunity to gain more concrete evidence of the benefits that TCR could bring within YOP, but it also enabled more detailed recommendations to be made about its introduction and operation within specific types of schemes. The preliminary results from these pilot schemes, together with an account of the development of the general approach of TCR, were published in November 1981 as another of the reports in the MSC's Special Programmes Research and Development Series.

Grouping of Skills, Learning at Work and Trainee Centred Reviewing were three of the main approaches to quality development which followed on from the ground work laid by the PROFILE group during the first year of YOP. However, they were only part of a wider and more diversified research and development programme which also included, for example; 'Exemplary Projects' in the organisation of off-the-job training by local education authorities, and a project carried out by the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling on individual guidance and support within YOP. Thus, it can be seen that there was no shortage of initiatives being sponsored by the MSC which were concerned with the development of a higher quality programme. The problem was that this research and development work took time. Projects set up in the first two years of YOP did not for the most part produce results until the third and fourth years, and it was only in the final year of the programme that a start could be made on the large-scale implementation of their recommendations. Meanwhile, as we have seen, the size of the programme grew inexorably.

8. Quality or Collapse

With the publication of Making Experience Work at its beginning, 1979 had been proclaimed as 'the year of quality' for YOP. (83) The comparatively modest rate of growth of the programme during its second year made it possible for certain progress to be made. As we have seen, there was some improvement of performance in relation to each of the three quantitative gauges of quality that had been established at the end of the first year. However, this progress was slowed down by the financial cuts that were imposed on the MSC from June 1979 onwards, and at the end of this second year the original qualitative goals were still far from being met. Then, during the summer of the third year, the numbers being taken into the programme began to rise rapidly and, as a consequence, the prospect of realising these qualitative goals receded still further into the distance. This combination of quantitative growth and qualitative regression precipitated a crisis of confidence in the credibility of the programme as a whole.

This crisis can be understood in terms of the analysis made in Chapter 3, which interpreted the original conception of the Youth Opportunities Programme in relation to the MSC's wider philosophy of manpower policy. (84) It will be remembered that the first aspect of the MSC's approach to a comprehensive manpower policy involved the combination of both social and economic functions which was the characteristic feature of an active manpower policy. In the Holland Report, the social function of YOP was expressed in terms of the new programme being designed to meet the personal needs of individual unemployed young people; whereas the principle expression of its economic function was to be found in the programme's primary objective of securing permanent employment for these young people at the first possible opportunity. As we noted subsequently, the effect of the introduction of the school leaver undertaking was to put the emphasis onto the social side of this dual function, ensuring

that the scale of need would be the determining factor in the future development of the programme, thus giving YOP the potential to develop beyond any rationale that might be constructed in terms of an active manpower policy.⁽⁸⁵⁾ This, in fact, is precisely what had happened by the half-way point in YOP's five year life-span. When youth unemployment took off in the summer of 1980, YOP was forced by its undertakings to expand rapidly in response. Yet, the deterioration of the state of the labour market affected not only the number of entrants to the programme, but also the employment placement rates of the trainees at the end of their schemes. As we have seen, by the summer of 1980, only about 40% of work experience trainees were finding jobs and the figure was still falling. Thus, the same forces that were causing the huge expansion of YOP as a social programme were simultaneously undermining its principle claim to have an economic function.

However, YOP did have a secondary claim to the fulfilling an economic function - as a training programme, or rather as a programme with a substantial training content. This was not directly dependent upon the state of the labour market, but rather upon the balance and quality of the provision that was included within the programme. Yet, as we have already seen, at the beginning of its third year YOP was still well short of its original objectives in these respects, and was falling further back as the number of entrants began to expand more rapidly. Moreover, the various research and development projects that had been set up to examine new approaches to quality improvement were still for the most part only in their preliminary stages. Thus, not only was the programme losing its credibility as a direct means of helping young people into employment, it was also losing ground in terms of this secondary claim to be fulfilling, at least in part, the more long-term objectives of a training programme. If nothing was done, the prospect was that YOP would become just a huge social programme, with no

credible objective other than keeping young people out of the dole queues for six months or so.

The second aspect of the MSC's approach to a comprehensive manpower policy was that of limited direct intervention in the labour market. YOP conformed to this principle in so far as it was a 'special programme', designed only to operate where the normal mechanisms of the labour market were failing. As it was originally planned on the basis of the unemployment predictions then available, the programme was to be 'special' in two different senses: first, it was to have a limited life-span of five years; and secondly, it was to apply only to the least qualified and most disadvantaged minority of young people. When the youth unemployment levels started their dramatic rise in the summer of 1980, both these senses of the word 'special' began to lose their application in the context of YOP. First, it became clear that the problem of youth unemployment was going to persist for the foreseeable future and that YOP would not simply be able to come to an end as scheduled in April 1983. Secondly, it also became evident that the scale of the problem was going to increase greatly and that YOP would soon be catering for as many as half of each year's school leavers.⁽⁸⁶⁾ Thus, without any proper planning, YOP was being transformed towards becoming a permanent and comprehensive alternative to the normal entry of school leavers into the labour market. Furthermore, as the scale of the programme was growing, concern was mounting about some of its unintended effects upon the labour market. As we have seen, the 1980 survey of sponsors revealed almost a 30% rate of substitution amongst WEEP schemes.

Finally, the third aspect of the MSC's approach to a comprehensive manpower policy was that of a corporatist style of policy-making. In relation to the original plans for YOP, this was expressed both in the composition of the Working Party that was responsible

for these plans, and in the proposed composition of the area and national boards that were to oversee the new programme. Moreover, closely related to this corporatist style of policy-making was the application of the principle of voluntarism within the plans for YOP. Thus, it was made clear in the Holland Report that all those taking part in new programme - employers, trade unions, voluntary organisations, colleges, and most importantly, the trainees - should be doing so out of choice and not as a result of compulsion. Both the corporatist and the voluntarist aspects of YOP relied on there being a certain consensus about its purpose and value as a policy. The crisis of credibility into which the programme entered during its third year put this consensus under severe strain.

As we have seen, YOP was moving rapidly towards becoming both a permanent and comprehensive programme, yet one with admitted negative side effects on the labour market and no credible positive economic function. Under such circumstances, there was some doubt about the willingness of government to continue meeting the rising costs that were entailed,⁽⁸⁷⁾ and it was difficult for any of the parties involved to retain much confidence in the future of YOP. Of the interests represented on the national and local boards, it was amongst the trade unions that the greatest sense of unease existed about the way in which the programme was developing. The focus of this concern was upon the abuse of trainees within WEEP schemes, involving their exploitation as cheap labour and as substitutes for permanent employees. Demands were made that the monitoring of the programme should be tightened up, and these were accompanied by threats that the trade union movement would withdraw their active support if nothing was done about these abuses.⁽⁸⁸⁾ At the same time, signs were emerging of greater resistance to the programme on the part of the young people themselves. They were not directly represented on the boards which had been set up to oversee the management of special programmes, but they could always vote with their feet by refusing to enter the schemes, or make known their feelings in various forms of anti-YOP demonstrations.

These tended to focus on the issue of 'cheap labour', but what was really responsible for this mounting disaffection amongst young people was the declining rate of job placements at the end of the schemes. Working a 40 hour week with little or no proper training included, and receiving in return a 'training allowance' which was only slightly above the level of social security benefit, was acceptable to most young people so long as there was a reasonable prospect of it leading to a proper job in the end. But, once the word got around that a large proportion of trainees were failing to get jobs, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the credibility of YOP amongst the young people that it was supposed to be helping, particularly those in the worst unemployment blackspots. (89)

Thus, the crisis in the development of YOP affected the programme's status in relation to each of the three principle aspects of the MSC's philosophy of a comprehensive manpower policy. First, YOP no longer had a credible economic function, and therefore could not be considered as making a positive contribution to an active manpower policy. Secondly, it was no longer a special programme, but was taking over the normal functions of the youth labour market, and having certain adverse side-effects in doing so. Thirdly, there was no longer the real consensus about the value and purpose of the programme which was required for it to retain its corporatist and voluntarist characteristics. Moreover, the second of these points, the fact that YOP could no longer be considered to have the status of a special programme, ensured that the implications of the crisis in its development could not be restricted within the bounds of a special programmes policy, but affected the MSC's whole approach to the implementation of manpower policy.

The establishment of the Special Programmes Division in April 1978 had been a recognition of the increasing importance of this area of activities within the context of MSC operations as a whole.

Nevertheless, it was still to be a 'special' area, and was originally regarded as having only a limited and marginal role in comparison with the principle functions of the Commission involving the provision of employment and training services. Thus, in the first year of its existence, the SPD's expenditure amounted to only 15% of the MSC total, whereas the shares of the Employment Services Division and the Training Services Division were 25% and 48% respectively.⁽⁹⁰⁾ However, by the third year, the SPD had overtaken the E.S.D. and its share was rising to over 30%.⁽⁹¹⁾ This increase in the comparative importance of the SPD was not only the result of the growth of YOP, but also of the cutbacks that were being imposed on the MSC as a whole. Before 1979, the Commission's budget had been expanding comparatively freely. But then, from June 1979 onwards, the new Conservative Government had started to impose a series of cuts in planned expenditure, both for the current year and for a number of years ahead.⁽⁹²⁾ Initially the SPD took its share of these cuts and, as we have seen, they had some effect upon the development of YOP, though they were mainly directed at the adult programme, STEP. However, once the unemployment levels started their rapid rise during 1980, it soon became clear that, whatever happened to STEP, the SPD would require a substantial increase in resources if it was going to continue to meet the undertakings made on behalf of YOP. Given the cutbacks being imposed on the MSC as a whole, these extra resources for YOP could only be provided at the expense of activities being carried out by the other two divisions. Particularly affected were some of the more long-term training policies of the TSD, whose share of total MSC expenditure was to be reduced below 40% by the end of the 1980/81 financial year.⁽⁹³⁾

Clearly, then, YOP's growth and development beyond its original definition as a special programme had serious implications for the development of the MSC's whole approach to manpower policy. The programme was not only taking over the

normal functions of a particular sector of the labour market, it was doing so at the expense of the employment and training services which were the MSC's principle means of fulfilling the dual economic and social functions of an active manpower policy. This would not have mattered so much had YOP itself been able to retain or develop a credible economic function. However, the fact that it had not been able to do so, meant that the programme's growth at the expense of the Commission's other activities put in question the MSC's whole development in relation to the fulfillment of an active manpower policy. Moreover, with regard to the third aspect of the MSC's approach to a comprehensive manpower policy, the loss of consensus about the value and purpose of YOP threatened also the wider consensus which formed the basis of MSC policy as a whole. Thus, the growing prominence of YOP within the MSC's activities ensured that the programme's crisis of credibility was equally a crisis for the Commission itself.

The real underlying problem was that the MSC had originally been created to develop manpower policy in the context of full employment, as guaranteed by a macro-economic policy of demand management; yet now it was in the front line of a special measures response to mass unemployment, in the absence of any positive government action being taken at the macro-economic level.⁽⁹⁴⁾ Examining the future development of its policies over the period 1980-84, the MSC made plain that the 'major responsibility for dealing with the level of unemployment rest(ed) with the Government', and that "the Commission consider(ed) its business to be about employment rather than unemployment."⁽⁹⁵⁾ However, it was acknowledged that the Commission could play an important supporting role through its provision of services to the unemployed. The question that needed to be answered was how this could be made a meaningful response in the face of rising mass unemployment, without excessively compromising the Commission's principle function of administering an active manpower policy through its employment and training services. It was decided that an immediate review of the Commission's Services to the

unemployed was necessary.

The review took place over the summer of 1980 and was reported to the September meetings of both the Special Programmes Board and the Commission itself. The report emphasised both the limitations on what the MSC could do about unemployment and the danger of its other services being adversely affected. It was clearly stated that the current level of unemployment was "overwhelmingly ascribable to insufficient demand" in the economy and that the Commission could do nothing about this.⁽⁹⁶⁾ All that it could do under such economic conditions was, in effect, "to redistribute unemployment, by helping some people back into work at the expense of others who might be deemed to be better able to look after themselves."⁽⁹⁷⁾ Yet, even in pursuing this limited role, there was thought to be a danger of these 'distributional' activities impinging on the normal services to the labour market, and of the Commission becoming "identified as a welfare agency rather than as an agent of change in the labour market."⁽⁹⁸⁾ The conclusion drawn by the review was that such help would have to remain restricted to the two priority groups being served by the existing special programmes, the young unemployed and the long-term adult unemployed.⁽⁹⁹⁾ Yet, as we have seen, such was the scale of unemployment in prospect that even the attempt to continue the provision of special measures for just these two priority groups posed a serious threat to the principle manpower policy functions of the Commission.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ In this situation, if the Commission wanted to retain its manpower policy identity, there were two theoretical options open to it with regard to its services to the unemployed. First, even within these limited priority groups, it could abandon the attempt to keep its scale of provision in any way commensurate with the scale of need. Secondly, it could try to develop the content of provision in such a way that this could be regarded as making a positive contribution to the wider goals of an active manpower policy. The review in effect recommended the first option with regard to the long-term adult unemployed, and the second option in the case of the young unemployed.⁽¹⁰¹⁾

The plans which resulted from this review, as endorsed by the Government, were announced in the House of Commons by the Conservative Secretary of State for Employment, Jim Prior on 21st November 1980.⁽¹⁰²⁾ First, YOP was to be expanded to cater for 440,000 entrants in the financial year 1981-82. At the same time, as we have already seen, the date for completion of the next school leaver undertaking was brought forward to Christmas, and the target group of the second undertaking was altered from the long-term unemployed 16-18 year olds to the 'other 16 and 17 year olds' who had been unemployed for over 3 months. As well as setting these quantitative targets, the Secretary of State promised that more emphasis would be put on good quality training and on progression between schemes. Furthermore, he stated what was the eventual goal of this new development of YOP and gave some indication of its wider significance. The key passages in this regard were as follows:

"We are trying as resources permit, to work towards the point where every 16 and 17 year old not in education or a job will be assured of vocational preparation lasting as necessary up to his or her 18th birthday."

"We see this development of YOP in the wider context of improving preparation for and training in work for all young people, and not just the unemployed."⁽¹⁰³⁾

In relation to this latter statement, it was also mentioned that there would be an acceleration of the expansion of Unified Vocational Preparation (U.V.P.). This was a programme of vocational preparation for young people already in employment, which had been run on a pilot basis over the previous five years. The aim was to ensure that there would be some 6,500 places by 1981/82 and 20,000 by 1983/84. The speech also referred to special measures aimed at the adult unemployed. The cuts imposed in June 1979 had led to STEP being virtually

halved in size and restricted in its geographical coverage to certain designated areas. This new announcement, in effect, merely reversed these earlier cuts and gave the provision a different name. Thus, the new Community Enterprise Programme (C.E.P.) was to provide some 25,000 places nationwide by March 1982.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Completing the package of special measures, there were to be extensions made to certain existing employment subsidies. The total cost of all these new measures was put at £570m for 1981-82, an increase of nearly £250m over existing provision. This was said to represent "a massive practical demonstration of (the Government's) concern for the unemployed."⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

The significance of this speech needs to be interpreted in terms of the analysis that has just been made of the nature of the crisis in YOP's development and its implications for MSC policy as a whole. First, the planned expansion of YOP to some 440,000 entrants marked the acceptance of the fact that the programme was going to develop into a comprehensive form of provision. Given the public sympathy which existed for the young unemployed, it would have been politically impractical to abandon the attempt to match the scale of provision to that of need. Indeed, the undertaking which existed to respond to the scale of school leaver unemployment was given a new emphasis by the bringing forward of its completion date. The only reduction in the scope of commitment was with regard to 18 year olds. As we have already seen, the change made in the second undertaking signalled that the principle client group of the programme was to be narrowed down to 16 and 17 year olds. This in fact merely reflected the reality of the situation that not many 18 year olds were interested in what YOP had to offer.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ At the same time, it provided a useful excuse for not raising the training allowance,⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ thus helping to control the programme's level of expenditure. The goal then, as explicitly stated, was for a comprehensive form of provision for all 16 and 17 year olds not in full-time education or employment. Yet, if the scale of this new provision was not to interfere adversely with the wider manpower policy goals of the Commission, it needed

to be positively integrated into them. Hence, the importance of setting this development of YOP in the wider context of improving work preparation and training for all young people, and of linking it up as a parallel development with UVP. In the MSC's review of services to the unemployed this had been described as the 'traineeship option' for YOP.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ If not yet a proper training programme, it could now at least be argued that YOP was developing towards becoming one and therefore making a positive contribution towards wider manpower policy goals. There was thus a new rationale for the programme in terms of active manpower policy and a new basis for consensus about its future development. There was even a retrospective justification for giving the young people the status of trainees and paying them only an allowance. However, all this depended upon action being taken to demonstrate that YOP really was heading in this new direction and had not merely been provided with another excuse to continue its unplanned expansion. Two forms of action in particular were needed. First, as indicated in the speech, a new emphasis would have to be put upon the quality of content of the programme. Secondly, the Secretary of State's brief remark concerning the wider context of this development of YOP would have to be translated into a definite and detailed set of plans showing exactly how the re-launched programme would eventually be integrated into the broader training strategy of the Commission.

Before examining the action taken in these two regards, a brief comment needs to be made about the plans announced to cater for the long-term adult unemployed. The halving of expenditure on STEP, which took place a year previously, had already shown that there was no commitment to keep the scale of provision for this group in line with their scale of need. Although the MSC's review recommended that this cut should be more than restored, it acknowledged that the new target of 30,000 filled places by March 1982 would still be an inadequate response to the scale of the problem.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Given the likely increase in the numbers of the long-

term unemployed, it was noted that this might even represent a diminution of the comparative scale of the programme in relation to the client group (which is in fact what happened). As we have seen, in the Secretary of State's announcement, the target figure for the renamed Community Enterprise Programme was reduced to 25,000 filled places. This made it even more clear that only a token effort was to be made for this group, which apparently did not enjoy the same degree of public sympathy as the young unemployed.

Returning now to YOP, it should be noted how the importance of quality improvement in the future development of the programme was given independent emphasis by the influential contemporary report entitled Quality of Collapse?. This report, which was published by Youthaid in January 1981, was the product of a review of the programme embarked upon in May 1980. Already, by August, the working group which was collecting the evidence had become convinced that YOP would collapse unless its quality was greatly improved - hence the title of the report.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Most of the evidence considered has already been recorded in this chapter or the previous chapter, under the various heading of qualitative or quantitative development. Moreover, the main recommendation made in the final report was very similar to the plan for the future development of YOP which, by then, was already being implemented by the MSC. This recommendation was that "YOP should be re-launched as a 12 month programme of vocational preparation and further education, available to every 16-18 year old who wishes to take advantage of it."⁽¹¹¹⁾ Despite the fact that it was thus in a sense overtaken by events, Quality or Collapse? was nevertheless a significant document. It provided the public with a detailed and coherent analysis both of why such a re-launch of the programme was necessary and of what this implied, particularly with regard to the crucial importance of quality improvement.

The Quality or Collapse? analysis was to a large extent agreed with by the senior MSC officials responsible for the development of special programmes policy. Already in November 1980, a paper had been presented to the Special Programmes Board which set out a new framework for quality improvement within YOP.⁽¹¹²⁾ The introduction listed a number of factors, such as the programme's continuing growth in scale, which needed to be recognised as limitations on the scope of any future plan for quality improvement. "Nevertheless," it was emphasised, "vigorous efforts must be made and must be seen to be made." Otherwise, "the credibility of YOP could quickly evaporate."

By January 1981, the date of the publication of Quality or Collapse? a more detailed 'Quality Improvement Plan' was ready to be presented to the Special Programmes Board. The first point which needs to be noted is that, although this plan was ostensibly a response to the Secretary of State's relaunching of YOP towards the goal of a comprehensive training programme, it still took the Holland Report as its starting point for the framing of objectives. Thus, the quality standards, which had originally been set as requirements for YOP as a limited special programme, were now to be revamped as the basis of the quality improvement strategy required for YOP's transformation towards a comprehensive training programme. This perhaps provides an initial indication that the plan may not have been quite all that it was made out to be.

The actual content of the Quality Improvement Plan is difficult to summarise. This is mainly because the list of its fundamental objectives appears to have been set out differently in almost each of the documents in which it was discussed. The most concise list was provided by the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes. This stated that there were three medium term objectives:

"- the development of young people's basic skills such as calculating, practical problem solving and the use of tools;

- systematic development of model schemes linked to particular fields of employment;

- ensuring that all involved with YOP at a local level, including young people themselves, be given a clear understanding of YOP, its objectives and the individual's progress in the Programme." (113)

Other lists mentioned variously: the development of a framework of occupational clusters and related curricula for the improvement of job-specific learning; the improvement of off-the-job learning provision; the improvement of the operational competence of the SPD; the improvement of personal support and advice for the trainees; and the provision of a pedagogical underpinning to these other objectives in terms of the development of teaching aids and materials. In each case, these objectives tend to have been stated as generalised aspirations rather than as precise goals against which future progress could be measured. This perhaps is not surprising, given how unsatisfactory the programme's performance was at this time in relation to some of the more straightforward quantitative gauges of quality improvement. It might be remembered, for example, that it was in March 1981 that the MSC had to recognise that YOP's monitoring system had broken down and abandon some 40,000 outstanding visits.

In fact, the purpose of the Quality Improvement Plan and its various lists of objectives appears to have been mainly presentational. Both the MSC's own analysis and that of Quality or Collapse? demanded that there should be a major initiative on the quality improvement front to save YOP from imminent collapse. However, the quality of the programme could not be transformed overnight, and the MSC was already doing virtually everything that it could, given its limited resources and the ever-increasing scale of provision. Yet, if a major new initiative was thus impossible, it was still vital that the appearance of one should

be given. The Quality Improvement Plan fulfilled this function by providing a loose framework in which all the various piecemeal initiatives already taking place, such as Grouping of Skills, Trainee Centred Reviewing etc., could be bundled together and presented in the form of something new and important. Of course, these various initiatives would have had to be brought together into a single plan at some stage in YOP's transformation. However, in January 1981, most of their work was still in the process of development, and by no means ready to be implemented on the scale required to make a significant impact upon the level of quality throughout the programme as a whole. Their re-packaging in the form of Quality Improvement Plan was necessary at this stage to distract attention away from what was actually happening on the ground, where in many respects quality was deteriorating. Essentially, the plan was a stop-gap measure, stalling criticism and enabling the programme to survive until the various quality initiatives were in fact ready to be implemented.

9. The New Training Initiative

Being seen to be doing something about quality improvement was not enough. Survival also depended upon a rapid response being made to the Secretary of State's remarks about the eventual goal of YOP's development and its wider significance. The first stage of this response was the publication in May 1981 of the MSC Consultative Document, A New Training Initiative (N.T.I.). This was presented as the starting point of an attempt on the part of the MSC to reassess and reorganise the whole process of manpower training in this country. To this end, the document set out three major and inter-related objectives for training in the 1980s. The first concerned better arrangements for skill training to agreed standards; the second, improving vocational education and training for all young people; the third, opening up more opportunities for adults to train. All three of these objectives were understood to have some bearing on the future of YOP, but obviously it was the second that was of primary significance to the development of the programme. Stated in more detail, this second objectives was :

"...(to) move towards a position where all young people under the age of 18 have the opportunity either of continuing in full-time education or of entering a period of planned work experience combined with work related training and education." (115)

The statement of this objective confirmed the MSC's recognition of the fact that provision for the young unemployed could no longer be maintained within a special programmes framework. At the same time, it reiterated and gave substance to the Secretary of State's promises concerning the future development of YOP. Thus, the goal was established of a comprehensive programme of foundation training for all young people not in full-time education, including the employed as well as the unemployed. Moreover, as one of the three principle objectives of the NTI, this goal was firmly integrated within the MSC's new interpretation of its whole training

strategy. This meant that the development of YOP could once more be positively aligned within the MSC's comprehensive approach to manpower policy. First, as an integral element of the new training strategy, the future development of YOP could be regarded as fulfilling the dual economic and social functions required for it to contribute to an active manpower policy. Secondly, with reference to the principle of limited intervention within the labour market, the goal of this development in a comprehensive form of provision for all under 18s not in full-time education marked an acknowledgement of the fact that YOP was rapidly substituting itself for the normal workings of the youth labour market. Yet, at the same time, it had the effect of separating off the whole age group from the adult labour market. Thus, the principle of limited intervention was to be restored with regard to young people by taking them completely out of the normal labour market. Finally, with regard to the MSC's corporatist style of policy-making, it should be noted that the NTI was initially presented in the form of a consultative document. This process of consultation provided the means of establishing a new consensus, not only for the NTI as a whole, but also for the future development of YOP as an integral element thereof.

The outcome of the consultative process was a document entitled A New Training Initiative: An Agenda for Action, which was published by the MSC in December 1981. This stressed the support which had been received for the objectives of the NTI, both from the Government and from the other major interests concerned.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Having successfully established this consensus, it was possible for a more detailed 'agenda for action' to be proposed. In particular, the wider agreement over the second objective was perceived as 'an important milestone'⁽¹¹⁶⁾, and the need was expressed to take as rapid steps as possible towards the realisation of the goal of a comprehensive scheme of training and vocational preparation for all young people not continuing in full-time education.⁽¹¹⁷⁾ The first such step was to be the establishment of a 'high level task group' representing the usual MSC grouping

of interested parties, which was to examine and report on the structure, scope and content of such a general scheme, and to propose a time-table for the transition towards its full implementation.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Meanwhile, as far as YOP was concerned, the next step was to be the creation for its final year of 100,000 "new style" twelve month high quality training opportunities, as a preliminary to the up-grading of the programme into a proper training scheme covering all unemployed school leavers by September 1983.⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Finally, in order to be ready for this transition of a special programme into a comprehensive training scheme, an immediate step for the MSC itself was to be the preparation for the early amalgamation of its Training Services and Special Programmes Divisions. Significantly, this was said to be a pre-requisite for the Commission to be able to fulfil its new responsibilities within the New Training Initiative.⁽¹²⁰⁾

The Conservative Government had endorsed the three broad objectives of the NTI as soon as the original consultative document was published in May 1981. Immediately after the MSC's publication of its 'Agenda for Action', in December 1981, the Government brought out a White Paper entitled A New Training Initiative : A Programme for Action which set out its own interpretation of what needed to be done next.⁽¹²¹⁾ By and large it was consistent with the MSC's plans. However, with regard to the training scheme that was to be introduced immediately following the end of YOP in 1983, the White Paper went into far more detail and at times gave an emphasis that was not altogether consistent with the MSC's thinking on this matter. Probably the most important difference concerned the way in which the new training scheme to be introduced in 1983 was regarded in relation to the ultimate aim of a general training scheme for all young people not continuing in full-time education.

The White Paper introduced the Government's conception of the new Youth Training Scheme (Y.T.S.) as a continuation of 'special provision' for the young unemployed which would be required

over 'the next few years'.⁽¹²²⁾ The MSC's task group investigating the 'possibilities' of a wider and more general training scheme for all young people was acknowledged, but it was said that priority must be given to the young unemployed.⁽¹²³⁾ Meanwhile, the development of existing training provision for those young people in employment was to be encouraged, but it was still stated that the best way of providing such training was through private arrangements made by employers.⁽¹²⁴⁾ The YTS was thus presented by the Government as a new form of temporary special provision for the young unemployed, without any foreseeable means of transition to the ultimate objective of NTI - a permanent training scheme for all young people under the age of 18 and not in full-time education.

The other major point of difference between the Government and the MSC concerned the extent to which unemployed young people should be compelled to participate in the new training scheme. The Government's White Paper proposed that unemployed minimum age school leavers covered by the guarantee of a place on the new YTS should not be eligible for supplementary benefit in their own right until at least a year after the date at which they left school. Any young person in this category who did not 'choose' to join in the new scheme would be assumed to be financially dependent on their parents, to whom child benefit would continue to be paid.⁽¹²⁵⁾ This, in fact, was a return to the same form of effective financial compulsion that had been used during the 20s and 30s to ensure the attendance of unemployed 16 to 18 year olds at the Junior Unemployment/Instruction Courses. As such, it put in jeopardy the principle of voluntarism to which the MSC had previously adhered in its administration of all forms of provision.⁽¹²⁶⁾ Both these points of difference with the Government over the YTS put in jeopardy the consensus that the MSC had built up around the basic objectives of the NTI.⁽¹²⁷⁾ However, the White Paper left a way out for compromise by stating that the Government welcomed the establishment of the task group, and would be 'fully prepared to consider re-allocating resources available

for young people in any way which may contribute more effectively to their futures."(128)

When the Youth Task Group published its report in April 1982, it deliberately set out to change the emphasis that the Government had put upon the introduction of its Youth Training Scheme as another impermanent special provision for the young unemployed. Thus the opening paragraph asserted :

"This report is about providing a permanent bridge between school and work. It is not about youth unemployment. What we propose will improve the prospects of young people to get and keep jobs but we have not been concerned with temporary measures."(129)

The report went on to emphasise the importance of moving towards a comprehensive scheme as soon as possible, rather than attempting further development within the existing framework of separate schemes for the employed and the unemployed. The limit placed by the Government on the total of resources available ruled out the possibility of moving straight to the ultimate goal of a scheme covering all young people under the age of 18 who had left full-time education.(130) However, the report set 1985 as a target date for the meeting of this ultimate objective. Meanwhile, it recommended that in September 1983:

"a start should be made by initially providing opportunities for all 16 year olds who have left full-time education for work and for those leaving full-time education aged 17 who become unemployed within the first year of leaving"(131)

The Government's guarantee was still only to apply to unemployed 16 year olds, and employers would still be free to employ young people of this age outside the new scheme:(132) nevertheless, the intent of being a comprehensive scheme was to be made clear in practice from the very outset.

With regard to its other major point of difference with the Government, the MSC reasserted the importance of the scheme being voluntary for all its participants, both sponsors and trainees.⁽¹³³⁾ On both points of difference, the MSC eventually prevailed. The report received the unanimous backing of all the interested parties represented on the Task Group,⁽¹³⁴⁾ and in the face of this new consensus the Government was forced to relent. In June 1982 the Secretary of State for Employment, Norman Tebbit, announced the Government's approval of the plans made by the Task Group, though he still left himself the option to remove the eligibility of 16 year olds to receive supplementary benefit at some later date.⁽¹³⁵⁾

10. Towards a Comprehensive Training Scheme?

The Youth Task Group Report was intended to mark the end of the whole special measures approach as far as the MSC's response to youth unemployment was concerned. In one simple move the problem of youth unemployment was defined out of existence and replaced by the historic opportunity of a comprehensive training scheme for all young people.⁽¹³⁶⁾ However, the real transformation that was necessary on the ground was by no means such a simple matter. The NTI and the Youth Task Group Report may have succeeded in reconstructing the consensus required for YOP to survive until the end of its fifth year; but, unless during this final year there was clear evidence of a large-scale qualitative transformation taking place, this was likely to provide only temporary relief from the crisis of credibility affecting the whole area of policy.

Our account of quality improvement within YOP left off with the Quality Improvement Plan being used as a holding operation whilst the various development projects completed their work. The main feature of the fourth year of YOP continued to be that of quantitative expansion. As we have already seen in the previous chapter, the increase to 440,000 entrants announced by the Secretary of State in November 1980 soon proved inadequate, and in July 1981 had to be raised by a further 110,000. The MSC's local staff were severely stretched to find these extra places, particularly given the additional pressure of the new Christmas deadline for the school leaver undertaking. Consequently, as already indicated by the quantitative gauges of quality improvement, little could be done during this year to raise the overall level of quality throughout the programme. However, by now the various quality development initiatives were producing their results, and it was possible to set up a small number of model 'high quality YOP schemes' showing the way forward for the future. Moreover, the large quantitative expansion of the programme which took place during this fourth year meant that a plateau was reached as far

as the number of entrants was concerned. This provided the opportunity that was necessary for large-scale quality developments to be implemented during the final year.

The MSC's 'Agenda for Action' had set the target of 100,000 'new style' twelve month high quality training places being available during 1982/83. In the Youth Task Group Report it was stated that these would be ready by September 1982.⁽¹³⁷⁾ As we have seen in the previous chapter, there were in fact only some 80,000 New Training Place entrants during this final year of YOP, and the target of 100,000 places was not reached until later during 1983. Nevertheless, given that at its peak there were just over 300,000 filled places on the programme, this represented the upgrading of a substantial proportion of total provision. Moreover, it must also be considered that during this year quality improvements were being introduced on many of the other schemes in order to prepare them for the full transformation to YTS in September 1983.

However, the real significance of these apparent changes during the final year of YOP depended upon the actual content of the upgrading processes being implemented at the ground level of the programme. The different forms of New Training Place, and their key elements of content in common, have already been described.⁽¹³⁸⁾ Certain of the elements of content were already specified for existing YOP schemes; however, others were derived from the various research and development initiatives, and generally all of the specifications were more detailed and demanding than had previously been the case. Yet, these were still only changes in the formal elements of content and, as such, did not necessarily constitute real quality improvement.

When the assessment of the qualitative performance of YOP was initially considered in the previous chapter, it was pointed out that quality could only be directly apprehended at the level

of the individual scheme or course.⁽¹³⁹⁾ Subsequently, in the course of this chapter, it has been said of a number of issues that they are considered in more detail by the local case study. The question of the real impact of the NTP upgrading process at the ground level of the programme is another of these issues. The local case study was carried out during the latter months of the final year of YOP, and thus it provided the opportunity to examine alongside each other both 'new style' and 'old style' schemes. The presentation of the conclusions of this local case study is to be the concern of the next chapter of this thesis.

Footnotes

1. Albert Booth quoted in the Department of Employment Gazette, July 1977, p.690.
2. See Youthaid, Quality or Collapse?, January 1981, p.12, para. 2.10. Here the failure of YOP to meet the Holland Report's objectives with regard to progression and integration is documented, and it is suggested that this was inevitable given the programme's prior objective to get the trainees into permanent employment at the first possible opportunity.
3. See MSC, The Work Experience Programme, A Report by Mr L.P. Bayly, former director of the programme, p.28ff. It was estimated that approximately 25% of WEP trainees received instruction in social and life skills.
4. MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, p.36, para.3.3.
5. See MSC, Special Programmes Division, Making Experience Work: Principles and Guidelines for Providing Work Experience, A Profile Publication, February 1979, inside front cover.
6. The work of the PROFILE task group was periodically reported on in papers presented to the Special Programmes Board.
7. See MSC, Special Programmes Division, op.cit., para.1.
8. Ibid., para.9.
9. See ibid., paras. 10 - 13.
10. See ibid., para. 13.5.
11. See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.27, paras. 1.105 - 1.113.
12. See. ibid., p.26, paras.1.98 - 1.104.
13. See Kathleen Greaves, Penny Gostyn, Chris Bonsall, MSC, Off the Job Training on YOP, A summary of research findings in work experience schemes 1979-82, MSC, Special Programmes, Research and Development Series: No.12, December 1982.
14. The main source of Table 11 is ibid., pp.8-9. However, because they are not directly comparable, this source does not give exact figures for the first two years. The source for the 1978/79 and 1979/80 figures is the Annual Reviews of Programmes. Originally (MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.26, para.1.103), the figure for 1978/79 was given as roughly 25%. However, subsequently this was revised down to 17% in the Review

of the Second Year of Special Programmes (p.12, para. 1.15.). Similarly, the figure of 38% given by this Review for 1979/80 was revised down to 35% in the Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes (p.8. para. 1.22.). These revisions appear to have been necessary because the weighting of the samples did not take sufficient account of the numerical predominance of WEEP schemes.

15. See MSC, The Work Experience Programme, op.cit., p.28ff.
16. According to a paper presented to the Special Programmes Board recording the results of the 1979 survey, only 12.5% of WEEP trainees were receiving off-the-job training.
17. See Kathleen Greaves, Penny Gostyn, Chris Bonsall, MSC, op.cit., p.8.
18. See MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, p.44, para.4.19.
19. See ibid., p.50, para.56.
20. See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.26, para.1.101.
21. See ibid., p.35, para.3.4
22. See ibid., p.26, paras.1.101-1.102.
23. See MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, p.12, paras. 1.47-1.48.
24. See L. Dawes, J. Harvey, G. Llewellyn, (PD2), MSC, 'Report on Postal Survey of Adults on YOP Schemes', p.20. It should be noted that there were some 6,500 adult staff employed on YOP by the end of the second year (MSC, op.cit., para 1.32).
25. See MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, p.12, paras. 1.46 - 1.49. Further details of this initiative were provided in a paper presented to the Special Programmes Board.
26. This was acknowledged in the Special Programmes Board paper, but not in the Annual Review, where it was merely stated that WEEP staff were included amongst those who were encouraged to attend this training.
27. See MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, pp.7-8, paras. 1.19-1.29.

28. See MSC, Special Programmes News, Special Issue, October 1982, p.7.
29. See ibid.
30. The normal staffing ratios on non-WEEP work experience schemes were 5 trainees to 1 staff and 8 trainees to 1 supervisor. The calculations made concerning the proportions of staff and supervisors receiving training make no allowance for staff turnover.
31. See L. Dawes, J. Harvey, G. Llewellyn, (PD2), MSC, op.cit., p.1. para. 9. This survey of adults on YOP schemes revealed a 64% annual turnover of supervisors.
32. See MSC, op.cit.
33. See ibid., p.3, para.25.
34. MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, p.46, para.4.36d.
35. See Public Accounts Committee, Fifth Report from the Committee of Public Accounts, Session 1977-78, House of Commons Papers No. 573, 1977-78, pp.xvii-xx.
36. See ibid., para.38.
37. See MSC, op.cit.
38. It should be noted that selective formal auditing of sponsors' accounts was carried out separately from monitoring by a special team of MSC auditors.
39. See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.26, para.1.98. This account of the purposes of monitoring is also drawn from a paper that was presented to the Special Programmes Board on the subject.
40. "Prior to October 1978 monitoring visits did take place but they were not nationally recorded and the volume was restricted owing to the pressure of other work and staff shortages." Comptroller and Auditor General's Report on Manpower Services Commission Accounts 1978-79, House of Commons Papers 488, Session 1979-80, pp.27-28, para.20.

41. This account of monitoring procedures is taken primarily from the paper that was presented to the Special Programmes Board on the subject in January 1979.
42. See MSC, op.cit., p.26, para.1.100.
43. See ibid., pp.18-21, Table 3 and paras. 1.44, 1.52, 1.55 and 1.58. The figure of 40,000 WEEP schemes is an approximate calculation based on the fact that there were 62,000 approved WEEP places, and the average was 1-2 places per scheme.
44. See Comptroller and Auditor General's Report on Manpower Services Commission Accounts 1978-79, op.cit., paras. 20-21; and Public Accounts Committee, Twenty-fourth Report from the Committee of Public Accounts, Session 1979-80, House of Commons Papers 763, 1979-80, pp.iv-x. Also see ibid., Minutes of Evidence, Appendix II, p.19, for details of numbers and ranks of MSC staff involved in the monitoring of Special Programme's projects in June 1980.
45. MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, p.11. para.1.45.
46. See Comptroller and Auditor General (Memorandum by), Special Employment Measures Administered by the Department of Employment and Manpower Services Commission, Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Committee of Public Accounts, House of Commons Papers 235-i, 1982-83.
47. Ibid., pp.25-26, para.10.16.
48. See Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Committee of Public Accounts, House of Commons Papers 235-ii, 1982-83, paras. 1521-1527.
49. A further piece of evidence of what really happened with regard to the monitoring of YOP is provided by this candid statement which was made by a senior MSC official at the beginning of the fourth year of the programme: "There have been certain perilous periods when virtually no monitoring of work experience schemes has been happening at all. When place finding reaches a certain pitch of urgency the entire field staff is committed to finding numbers. We have always known at SPD headquarters that monitoring was often dangerously thin and not sufficient to maintain any of the standards that we believed in."

50. See MSC, Young People and Work, May 1977, p.43, para.4.5.
See also above Chapter 3, p. 120.
51. See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, July 1979, p.19, paras.145-150.
52. See MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, pp.8-9, paras. 1.30-1.34.
53. See MSC, Special Programmes News, Special Issue, October 1982, p.10.
54. See Sheila Smith, MSC, 'The Responses of Employers to Work Experience as an Alternative to Educational Qualifications', p.6, para.15. The Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes (p.9, para.1.28) mentioned that a survey had shown that 4 out of 5 WEEP sponsors would not have recruited any additional full-time employers in the absence of the programme. However, it incorrectly suggested that this was the result of the January 1980 survey rather than the September 1978 Survey.
55. This paper (SPB/79/29) was presented to the Board in July 1979.
56. Ibid., pp.1-2, para 3.
57. Ibid., p.5, para 11.
58. See MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, pp.8-9, paras. 1.30-1.34.
59. Although the survey revealed no evidence of recruitment substitution on non-WEEP experience schemes, it did show some evidence of financial substitution - schemes being funded by the MSC which otherwise would have been funded in some other way. However, this was on a smaller scale than had been revealed by the previous survey of JCP sponsors. With regard to displacement, the 1980 survey produced no evidence, but one would not expect it to do so merely by asking the sponsors. They were not in a position to see the indirect effects elsewhere in the labour market of the work being done by their schemes; and even if they did suspect that displacement was taking place, it was not in their interests to admit it. More will be said about displacement and its detection in the local case study below. The additional information concerning the results of the 1980 survey of sponsors which has been discussed in this footnote was given in a paper presented to the Special Programmes Board in November 1980.

60. The effect of this distinction, making one form of substitution more serious than the other, was to make this other form appear less serious than it otherwise would have done. In fact, as will be seen in the local case study, the use of WEEP schemes as subsidised training or screening for potential employees became accepted practice at the ground level. Yet, it should be remembered that originally in the Holland Report this had been clearly identified as an abuse, and that it had been stated that if it did happen it might be necessary to review the basis of funding WEEP schemes. No such review took place.
61. The January 1980 survey of sponsors was carried out on behalf of the MSC by British Market Research Bureau Ltd.
62. This list was provided in a paper presented to the Special Programmes Board in May 1981. Although it was stated here that 1 in 5 proposals for WEEP schemes were being turned down, it must be doubted the extent to which approval procedures could be made more rigorous, given the immense pressure to expand the number of places available in the programme.
63. See MSC, op.cit., p.9, para.1.34.
64. Apparently, the task group was in danger of becoming merely a 'talk shop', and was also causing certain resentment amongst some members of the Special Programmes Board who saw it as a rival source of decision-making.
65. This decision was conveyed to the members of the PROFILE group in a paper presented by the Director of Special Programmes in August 1979.
66. See MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, p.12, paras.1.53-1.54.
67. See ibid., para.1.52; and MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.8, para.1.24.
68. A brief history of the 'Grouping of Skills' research is provided in 'Grouping of Skills Review', DTP Paper for MSC Chairman's Management Committee, 19th June 1981, pp.33-35. It should be noted that in this research 'skill' was not used in its strict industrial sense referring to a time-served craft, but in the much wider sense of any factor contributing to the carrying out of operations and tasks (see ibid., p.1).
69. See ibid., pp.40-44.
70. See ibid., pp.49-52.

71. See M. Freshwater and C. Townsend, Analytical Techniques for Skill Comparison: A Report Describing Some North American Approaches, Psychological Services Directorate of Training, TSD, MSC, November 1977.
72. See C. Townsend, Skills Needed for Young People's Jobs:- A Visual Presentation and Discussion of the Findings Volume I, IMS, CN323, November 1981
73. See M. Freshwater, Making the Most of Training Workshop Opportunities Using a Basic Skills Checklist, MSC, TSD, Directorate of Training, July 1980.
74. Ibid., introduction
75. See Occupational Training Families, IMS, April 1981. The eleven OTFs proposed were as follows:
 1. Administrative, Clerical and Office Services Occupations
 2. Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry and Fisheries Occupations
 3. Construction and Extractive Occupations
 4. Craft and Design Occupations
 5. Electronic, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Occupations
 - a) Manufacturing and Assembly Occupations
 - b) Installation, Maintenance and Repair Occupations
 6. Food Preparation and Service Occupations
 7. General Manufacturing and Processing Occupations
 - a) General Manufacturing Occupations
 - b) Processing Occupations
 8. Personal Services and Sales Occupations
 9. Community and Health Services Occupations
 10. Technical and Scientific Occupations
 11. Transport Services Occupations.
76. The project was commissioned in early 1980.
77. See L. Hilgendorf and R. Welchman, Tavistock Institute, Learning At Work: The Tavistock Guide, MSC, Special Programmes, Research and Development Series: No.9, August 1982.
78. See ibid., p.3.
79. Ibid., p.v.
80. See CCDU, Leeds University and ITRU, Cambridge, Trainee Centred Reviewing (TCR): Helping trainees to help themselves, MSC, Special Programmes, Research and Development Series: no.2, November 1981.

81. See ibid., introduction.
82. Ibid., p.1.
83. See IMS, Foundation Training Issues, IMS and MSC, February 1982, p.31.
84. See above, Chapter 3, p.125ff.
85. See above, Chapter 3, p.135.
86. See Youthaid, Quality or Collapse?, January 1981, p.1 for a contemporary account of this situation.
87. From June 1979 onwards, the new Conservative Government had imposed a series of cuts on the expenditure plans of the MSC, in line with its wider policy of bringing public expenditure under control. The need to expand YOP in response to the rising unemployment levels of 1980 conflicted with this policy of financial restraint, and initially there was some doubt as to how the Government would resolve this clash of commitments.
88. See TUC, Trades Union Congress Report, 1981, p.438ff. This was the culmination of a wave of complaints and concern which had been building up over the previous two years.
89. This was particularly evident in areas such as Merseyside and Tyneside, where it was attempted to organise various forms of protests and demonstrations.
90. See MSC, Annual Report 1978-79.
91. See MSC, Annual Report 1980-81, p.52.
92. See above Chapter 4, footnote 8; and MSC, Corporate Plan 1980-84, Chapter 4.
93. See MSC, Annual Report 1980-81, op.cit.
94. Or as Jim Prior put it, rather quaintly avoiding the question of governmental responsibility: "The MSC has had a lot of really rather bad luck since it was set up at a time when unemployment was comparatively low with a view that it would, as it were coordinate manpower policies, but that it would not have to engage itself in the way that has become necessary in dealing with special employment measures and need." This statement was made, when as Secretary of State of Employment, Mr. Prior was giving evidence to the Select Committee on Employment in July 1980. See House of Commons Papers, 1979-80, 444-v, para.249.

95. Ibid, 444-i, para.3.34.
96. See MIPD, MSC 'Review of Services to the Unemployed', September 1980, para.6.79.
97. Ibid.
98. Ibid., para. 5.13.
99. Ibid., para, 5.15.
100. Ibid., para, 5.21.
101. It should be noted that the review did not explicitly explain its recommendations in terms of this implicit theoretical choice.
102. See Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), Fifth Series, Volume 94, pp.133-135.
103. Ibid., pp.133-134.
104. The only other differences from STEP were that the new programme was to be open to 18 year olds and that more private sector sponsorship of projects was to be encouraged. The first of these two changes was meant to compensate 18 year olds for their reduced eligibility for YOP.
105. Ibid., p.135.
106. See above, Chapter 4, p.184. It will be remembered that 18 year olds constituted a large proportion of the failure rate of the undertaking to the long-term young unemployed and had a higher refusal rate than other age groups.
107. See Parliamentary Debates, (Hansard), Fifth Series, Volume 994, p.133.
108. See MIPD, MSC, op.cit., para 6.7.
109. See ibid., para. 6.19.
110. See Youthaid, op.cit., p.i.
111. Ibid., p.14. The main differences from the goal set out in the Secretary of State's speech were (a) the inclusion of 18 year olds and (b) the limiting of provision to 12 months.
112. This paper was in fact discussed by the Special Programmes Board on the day before the Secretary of State's speech in the House of Commons.

113. MSC, Review of the Third Year of Special Programmes, December 1981, p.8, para.1.21.
114. MSC, A New Training Initiative: A Consultative Document, May 1981, p.4, para.23.
115. See MSC, A New Training Initiative: An Agenda for Action, December 1981, p.4.
116. Ibid., p.7, para.40. It should be noted that the second objective of the NTI not only referred to improving the vocational preparation of both employed and unemployed young people, but also of young people still at school. The 'Agenda for Action' document noted that there was wide agreement that the process should begin at school, and this can be seen as the origin of the MSC's Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, which was launched in the autumn of 1982.
117. See ibid. It should be noted that in this sentence the term 'scheme' has been used where previously the term 'programme' was employed. With JCP, WEP, YOP, and STEP, the term 'programme' was used by the MSC to describe the whole entity, and the term 'scheme' was applied to the individual components that constituted the programme. Both the Government's White Paper and the MSC's 'Agenda for Action' reversed this conventional use of terminology. Thus, the new provision as a whole was described as the Youth Training Scheme, and the young people within it were to pursue individual programmes. I have changed my terminology in a corresponding manner.
118. See MSC, op.cit., p.8, para.41. The Task Group was also to consider the allocation of costs between the employer and the State, and the nature and level of income of the young people participating in the scheme.
119. See ibid., para.42. In parallel with this development of YOP, it was proposed that support should be increased for the training of young people in employment, both through UVP and other developments.
120. Ibid., p.7, para.29.
121. See A New Training Initiative: A Programme for Action, Cmnd. 8455, London, HMSO, December 1981, p.3.
122. See ibid., p.6, para.22.
123. See ibid., para.21.

- 124. See ibid., paras. 20 and 18.
- 125. See ibid., p.9, paras. 35 and 36.
- 126. See MSC, Youth Task Group Report, April 1982, para.3.14.
- 127. See The Times, 16th December 1981. The Government's plan for YTS was warmly welcomed by the CBI, but the TUC stated that the unions could not support the scheme in the form outlined by the White Paper.
- 128. A New Training Initiative: A Programme For Action, p.6., para. 21.
- 129. MSC, op.cit., para.1.1.
- 130. See ibid., para.4.5.
- 131. See ibid., para.4.6.
- 132. See ibid., paras.4.7 and 4.8.
- 133. See ibid., para.3.14.
- 134. See ibid., para. 7.25.
- 135. See The Guardian, 22 June 1982, 'Parliament' and Michael White, 'Skinhead Norman sees the light'.
- 136. The Youth Task Group Report, like the Holland Report before it, was liberally sprinkled with the rhetoric of the 'historic new deal'; see paras. 3.8 and 7.26.
- 137. See ibid., para.6.4.
- 138. See above, Chapter 4, pp.166 and 167.
- 139. See above, Chapter 4, p.169.

CHAPTER 6THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE LOCAL CASE STUDYIntroduction

The local case study was carried out in the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area during the period between October 1982 and April 1983. There were two main phases of research. The first consisted of the collection of background information about the local labour market and the development of YOP provision within it. The second involved a series of visits to a sample of local schemes and courses. Detailed accounts of both these phases are presented in a separate appendix, as are explanations of why such a local case study was carried out and why the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area was chosen for this purpose. Briefly, the object of the case study was to construct a detailed picture of what the Youth Opportunities Programme actually involved at the level of one particular local labour market. This was considered to be especially important, given the extent to which YOP was a locally organised form of provision. The Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area was chosen both for reasons of convenience, and because it appeared to be a local labour market which had certain unique features and yet was not unrepresentative in general terms.

The detailed account of the local case study presents a considerable volume of empirical data. Some is of a factual and technical nature, some is more descriptive and discursive. The object of this chapter is to draw out certain generalisations which can be related back to the central themes of the national level analysis. The first (and easiest) generalisation to make concerns the immense variety and complexity of the local programme. The analysis of YOP as a national programme has already established that it was not a single uniform provision, but rather a number of distinct forms of provision brought together under a single framework. The account of the local programme is structured primarily in

accordance with the three main sectors of provision - WEEP schemes, other work experience schemes, and the various forms of training course - and, within each of the latter two sectors, the different formal categories of schemes and courses are further distinguished. Yet, what is apparent from the descriptions is the extent to which the range and variety of individual schemes and courses developed beyond these formal distinctions, and to a certain degree across them. This was particularly so in the two work experience sectors, where the character of an individual scheme often depended more upon the nature of the organisation and personnel involved than upon the formal category to which it happened to belong.

Within each of the three main sectors, the accounts presented are further structured in accordance with the elements of content formally prescribed for the schemes and courses which they included. The original plan was to provide a brief description of what each of these formal elements of content signified at the ground level of the programme. This format has for the most part been maintained, though at times it was placed under considerable strain. As with the formal distinctions between different types of schemes and courses, so with the formal definitions of their content, it was found that such categories were not always the most relevant to describe what was actually taking place. In fact, as the local case study progressed, there seemed to be a general tendency for the formal terms in which the programme was described at the national level to lose their capacity to describe what was significant on the ground.

Obviously, in any institution or programme there will be some distinction between the way in which things appear from the bottom as opposed to the top. However, in the case of YOP, it would seem that this distinction between perspectives was considerably larger than might normally be expected. Explanations for this are not difficult to find. In the first place, as already emphasised, YOP was to a large extent a locally organised programme. Secondly, and more important, it was not directly delivered by the MSC, but relied upon the voluntary participation of sponsors and course

providers. Very little of the provision could be described as 'purpose-built'; rather it was a case of making use of whoever and whatever happened to be available. This being so, the development of the programme at the local level could not be tightly controlled in terms of formal structures. These could only provide a loose framework around which the pattern of provision had to be allowed to grow in accordance with the local conditions, and the interests and capacities of those most directly responsible for its delivery. The significance of what was happening amongst the complex variety of schemes and courses which resulted from this process of growth could not necessarily be adequately understood in terms of the formal structures around which the local programme had originally been encouraged to develop.

This first generalisation about the nature of YOP at the local level poses a problem with regard to further generalisations. Given that there was a certain gap between the understanding of the programme in terms of formal structures at the national level and the significance of the complex reality of individual schemes and courses at the local level, generalisations derived from the local case study cannot necessarily be fed directly back into the wider analysis of the programme. However, despite the wide range and variety of individual schemes and courses, it was possible to identify within each sector a certain underlying logic to the way in which the provision had developed and performed. Preliminary generalisations with regard to each of the three main sectors are presented in the appendix under the headings of 'Overall Impressions'. These now need to be linked up and presented in a form that can be fed back directly into the wider analysis of the programme as a whole. For this purpose, I intend to pose a number of key questions on the basis of which a selective summary can be presented of the material that has been covered by the local case study, rendering what was most significant at the local level in a form that can be more readily translated into the terms of the wider analysis. These questions are as follows: (1) How relevant was the range of provision to the needs of the local labour market?

(2) What were the most important factors affecting the quality of content of individual schemes and courses? (3) To what extent did the programme interfere with the normal workings of the local labour market? (4) How significant was the impact of the various quality improvement initiatives upon individual schemes and courses? (5) What were the implications of the above factors with regard to the implementation of the Youth Training Scheme at the local level?.

The questions all concern issues in relation to which the perspective of the local case study was able to provide a significant extension of the knowledge and understanding that had previously been gained from the national level analysis of the development and performance of YOP. In contrast, the statistical data concerning the quantitative development and performance of the programme was generally more complete at the national level than it was at the local level. Nevertheless, it was necessary to draw together some of the equivalent local statistics as background information in order to provide some further indication of how representative the local area might be. Obviously, there are inherent limits to what any single local case study can prove. However, I considered it important to demonstrate by using certain common points of reference that I had not chosen a particularly abnormal local example.

The statistical data and other background information presented in the full account of the local case study confirm that in general terms the Portsmouth Travel-To-Work Area was not an unrepresentative local labour market. The unemployment rate was just below the national average and, in terms of structure, there were to be found alongside each other both the problems of declining traditional industries and the potential of growth industries based on new technologies and services. The slightly more favourable than average state of unemployment in the local labour market was reflected in the local quantitative performance of YOP. In general the various undertakings to provide young people with places in the programme were more nearly met than was the case on average nationally; and, from such information as was available, it would

appear that the ratio of employed to unemployed trainees on leaving local schemes and courses was somewhat above the national average. Although in these general terms the Portsmouth Travel-To-Work Area could be considered to be close to the national average, and if anything in a slightly favoured position, it did nevertheless have a distinctive character as a local labour market and its own particular problems. The key factor was the naval connection and the traditional dependence of the local economy on the employment provided by the Dockyard, which was in the process of being run down.

1. Relevance

The fact that, although fairly representative in general terms, the Portsmouth Travel-To-Work Area did have a distinctive character and particular problems as a local labour market was of importance with regard to the question of the relevance of the range of local provision. However, the assessment of relevance required a considerably more detailed analysis of the structure and trends of employment in the local economy. The original intention was that the background information phase of the local case study would provide such an analysis. But, despite considerable efforts, it proved possible to go only slightly beyond the level of the generalisations that have already been referred to. Detailed, up-to-date statistical information about the local labour market was simply not available.

At the beginning of 1983 when this research was being carried out, the most recent reliable figures for the number and distribution of employees in employment with the Portsmouth TWA were those from the 1977 Employment Census. Thus, over the whole period of YOP's existence - a period of almost unprecedented change in terms of labour markets - there were no new figures for the number and distribution of employees in employment. There had been another Employment Census in 1981, but the local results were not due until 1984. (1) All that it was possible to do was to use the national results of this Census in order to make estimates of what might be expected to have happened locally since 1977. This of course to a certain extent undermined the original purpose of carrying out a local analysis. Furthermore, similar problems were encountered with the data which was specifically concerned with the entry of school leavers into the local labour market. Although certain up-to-date Careers Service figures existed for the South East Division of Hampshire (which was the practical equivalent of the Portsmouth TWA), trends in these figures could only be traced back over previous years for Hampshire as a whole. (2) Finally, it should be pointed out that all of these statistics were concerned

with the industrial analysis of employment, as opposed to its occupational distribution. Yet, from the point of view of vocational preparation, it is occupations rather than industries that are of direct significance. An industrial analysis can give some indication of occupational distribution, but it needs to be taken into account, for example, that by no means everybody who is employed in the engineering industry is an engineer.

Thus, the information necessary to make a detailed assessment of the relevance of the range of provision to the local labour market was not available. Yet, by the same token, neither was this information available to those who were responsible for planning the local programme. In so far as such planning attempted to take account of the distribution of employment opportunities within the local labour market, it could only do so in general terms. Likewise, any assessment of its success in doing so could only be made at a similar level of generality.

In each of the three sectors of the programme, the case study attempted to establish what efforts had been made to relate the range or provision to the local labour market and to assess how successful these efforts had been. In the case of the WEEP sector, which as nationally was by far the largest of the three, there appears to have been little conscious effort made to relate the range of schemes available to the situation of the local labour market. The occupational distribution of the schemes being provided depended largely upon which employers came forward as sponsors, or were allowed to do so by their unions. Nevertheless, as it happened, there seemed to be a certain natural tendency for this distribution to reflect in general terms the overall distribution of employment within the local labour market. Certainly, from the evidence available, it would appear that the movement which could be expected to be taking place away from traditional industries and towards various forms of service employment was registered in the occupational bias of this sector of provision. The only problem was that this bias did not necessarily correspond with the interests and aspirations of the unemployed young people for whom places had to be found. These, in

so far as they had any realistic basis, appeared to correspond more closely to the traditional pattern of the local labour market.

The other two sectors, the non-WEEP work experience schemes and the various forms of training course, allowed more scope for conscious planning in so far as they were to a greater extent purpose-built provision. However, in neither of these two sectors can it be said that there was systematic planning in relation to labour market needs. Rather, the planning which took place was sporadic, and often courses and schemes had simply been set up under what were considered to be the 'obvious headings'. In the few cases where efforts were made to plan provision in relation to specific needs identified in the local labour market, these do not appear necessarily to have been more successful if judged by their capacity to place trainees in employment. This illustrates once again the lack of reliable up-to-date labour market information. Yet, even if this information had been available, these sectors of provision could not have been planned systematically in response to it. Most of the schemes and courses were only to a limited extent 'purpose-built'. The restrictions placed on both resources and staff recruitment meant that new provision could not simply be set up in whatever vocational area was considered to hold out the brightest prospects for the future. In most cases, all that could be used were staff and facilities that were already in some respect redundant. Thus, they were available and could be afforded as YOP provision precisely because there was a lack of demand in their area of the local labour market. As a result, the bias in the occupational distribution of these schemes and courses naturally tended to be towards those traditional industries which were in decline. There was though one notable exception, the Information Technology Centre, which had been deliberately planned to respond to what had been identified as an area of growth in the local labour market. Yet, it was only capable of doing so because of the unique funding and staffing arrangements which allowed it to purchase expensive new capital equipment, and to recruit experienced and well-trained staff from a highly competitive sector of the labour market.

In this sense, it was the exception that proved the rule. Nevertheless, it should be recognised that the general occupational bias of these two sectors towards the declining traditional industries helped to balance the opposite bias of the WEEP sector, and in doing so gave more scope for individual young people's career aspirations to be taken into account.

Neither the local programme as a whole, nor its individual sectors, can be said to have been planned in a systematic way to respond to the needs of the local labour market. Yet, in so far as can be judged from the limited information available, it would appear that the natural dynamics of the way in which provision was constituted in each of the three sectors combined to produce a certain rough and ready correspondence. On the one hand, in the WEEP sector, which accounted for the majority of provision, the occupational distribution of places tended to reflect the developing pattern of local employment, with a certain bias towards the growing service sector. On the other hand, the two smaller sectors of YOP provision tended to have an occupational bias in the opposite direction, towards the traditional industrial pattern of local employment. Together, they offered a certain balance between the likely pattern of future demand in the local labour market, and the existing pattern of young people's job aspirations. It could of course be argued that only the first of these two factors should have been taken into account, and that otherwise young people were being led down occupational blind alleys. However, some obligation existed to take into account the aspirations of individual young people and, given the uncertainty of the future pattern of demand in the local labour market, there was a good case for balancing the two considerations. Moreover, given the general lack of reliable, up-to-date and detailed local labour market information, there was little point in attempting to plan the range of provision any more systematically. For YOP, with its limited emphasis on vocational training, a rough and ready correspondence relying on whatever happened to be available was probably good enough. The implications for YTS, however, will have to be considered below.

2. Quality of Content

With regard to the second question, concerning the key factors determining quality of content, it will be remembered that it was noted above how the categories of content which formally defined the various schemes and courses were not always the most relevant for describing what was actually taking place. For each of the three sectors, the descriptive accounts of the local case study are structured in accordance with formal categories such as recruitment, induction, planned work experience, off-the-job-training, counselling, etc. Yet, often these accounts merely serve to demonstrate how empty these formal categories were in relation to the reality of what was taking place on individual schemes and courses. This was particularly so in the WEEP sector where, looked at on the ground, the formal requirements were of a most minimal nature, amounting to little more than a matter of presentation. In the other two sectors the equivalent requirements meant more, and the fact that there was closer monitoring ensured that they were adhered to with greater strictness. Nevertheless, adherence to formal requirements was no guarantee of quality. This of course begs the question of what is meant by quality. But, if quality is defined broadly in terms of the scope and encouragement given for individual trainees to learn and develop, then certainly the key factor on which it depended was not an adherence to the formal requirements of content, but the capacity and interest of the organisations and individual staff who were most directly responsible for the delivery of the provision.

This general point can be well illustrated in relation to a particular element of content, off-the-job-training. It will be remembered that the percentage of work experience trainees receiving some form of off-the-job-training was one of the quantitative gauges of quality provided at the national level of analysis. What the local case study revealed was that this percentage figure was of limited significance, since it could not necessarily be assumed that the availability of off-the-job-training made any positive contribution

to the quality of a scheme. Quality did not simply depend upon there being off-the-job-training, it depended upon what this off-the-job-training consisted of and whether it was adequately integrated with the rest of the scheme. The evidence of the local case study was that much of the off-the-job-training provided in the Portsmouth TWA, and particularly that under the heading of Social and Life Skills, was inadequately integrated and made little positive contribution to the schemes with which it was associated. The exceptions depended upon particular combinations of individuals and institutions. What is more it is arguable that, given the right kind of supervisory staff, social and life skills could be as adequately imparted on-the-job, without any need for a formal off-the-job element. Certainly this was the experience of Community Industry, which operated outside the formal frameworks of YOP.

Thus far, throughout this analysis of the factors affecting quality at the local level, the role of individual providers has been emphasised as being more important than the definitions provided by formal structures. Given this emphasis, it is necessary to consider what the local case study revealed about the training and recruitment of staff. It will be remembered also that the volume of training of sponsors' staff taking place was the second of the quantitative gauges of quality referred to in the national analysis. As with the off-the-job training for the trainees, the contribution that this training made to the overall quality of provision depended upon its effectiveness as well as its volume. The evidence of the local case study on this matter was less conclusive than in the case of off-the-job training. Whereas most trainees expressed negative opinions of any off-the-job training they may have received, the opinions of supervisors on the value of MSC staff training were fairly evenly mixed. However, the evidence from Community Industry,⁽³⁾ where the 'scheme consultants' appeared to manage quite adequately without any such formal training, gave grounds for a certain amount of scepticism as to whether it was really necessary. Moreover, whatever the actual contribution of the training of sponsors' staff may have been, it should be remembered that it only affected one of the three main sectors of provision - the non-WEEP work experience schemes.

Although WEEP scheme staff were technically eligible for the same training, the evidence of the local case study confirmed that this was not a real factor to be taken into consideration. As for the training course sector (including the provision of off-the-job training), specific training for college staff undertaking YOP work was only just getting way on a systematic basis at the time of this research, and already it was being overtaken by the approach of YTS. Finally, the assessment of the effectiveness of such staff training as there was must be further qualified in relation to a consideration of staff recruitment. In the WEEP sector, of course, staff were not recruited specifically for YOP work, and this was also the case for a considerable proportion of the training course sector. Moreover, in the areas where staff were recruited specifically for YOP work, there were limitations on the choice that could be made. In particular, the non-WEEP work experience schemes had to recruit their staff off the unemployment registers. More generally, the nature of the pay and conditions of YOP work in both sectors where staff were recruited made it a marginalised and unstable form of employment. The effect of this on the relevance of the training that could be offered in these sectors has already been described. As far as quality was concerned, it meant that it was not always possible to recruit, or then to retain, the staff who would have been best-suited to the needs of the various schemes and courses. Rather it was a case of having to make do with those who happened to be available and were unable to find employment with better prospects elsewhere. These restrictions on the capacity to recruit and retain staff inevitably placed further limitations on the effectiveness of any staff training programme. However, this is not to imply that there were not individuals of high calibre and great dedication working within these schemes and courses. The point being made is that there was a lack of systematic and positive control over the quality of staff throughout the local programme, be it either through recruitment or training.

The third quantitative gauge of quality considered at the national level of analysis was the frequency of monitoring visits. Once again the significance of this quantitative gauge needs to be qualified with reference to the consideration of effectiveness as revealed at the local level. The general point about quality that has been made on the basis of the evidence of the local case study is that it could not necessarily be defined in terms of the formal elements of content which were specified for the various schemes and courses. This has a particular implication for the effectiveness of monitoring, given that quality was monitored primarily in terms of such formal requirements. What it implies is that the monitoring being carried out was only capable of providing a very limited and superficial form of quality control. On the one hand, the formal procedures involved could only really assess the level of presentation; on the other hand, the staff who were responsible for administering these procedures would generally have neither the time nor the expertise to investigate any further. These generalisations were above all true of the majority WEEP sector, which was by far the least regulated of the three.

In conclusion, what the local case study revealed about quality within YOP was that it could neither be formally defined nor systematically measured and controlled. To a large extent it depended upon individual circumstances of personnel and organisations that could only be influenced to a marginal extent by the local administration of the programme. As a result, there was a wide range of quality in each of the three sectors of provision. This can be understood as a particular aspect of the heterogeneous nature of the local programme which resulted from its dependence upon whoever and whatever happened to be available.

3. Labour Market Interference

The third of the key questions set out above concerned the extent to which the programme interfered with the normal workings of the local labour market. In relation to this question, it was originally hoped that the local case study would be able to provide evidence on two separate levels; first, at the level of the local labour market as a whole; and secondly, at the level of individual schemes and courses. Unfortunately, however, the lack of detailed and up-to-date information about the local labour market, which has already been referred to in connection with the earlier question of relevance, meant that there was virtually no evidence to found at the first of these two levels. In fact, the only point worth mentioning is a certain paradox in the relationship between two of the available sets of figures which can perhaps be explained in terms of the substitution effect of schemes in the WEEP sector.

It was noted when the relevance of the local programme was being considered that the change towards a greater proportion of service employment, which could be expected to have taken place in the the Portsmouth TWA since 1977 was reflected in the occupational bias of the distribution of WEEP schemes. Yet, in 1982, the proportion of school leavers in South East Hampshire finding their first jobs in service industries was almost 10 per cent less than either the proportion of WEEP schemes in this sector or the estimated proportion of the total number of employees in local employment at the same date. Moreover, since 1977, the number of school leavers entering these industries throughout Hampshire had declined by as large a percentage as the total entering all forms of employment.⁽⁴⁾ One possible explanation for why the general trend towards a greater proportion of service employment was not reflected in these school leavers' figures was the impact of the large number of WEEP schemes in this sector of employment, some of which might have replaced what other wise would have been school leavers' jobs. However, at most this can only be considered as a piece of circumstantial evidence, and the tenuous way in which the argument has had to be constructed

merely illustrates how difficult it was to find any useful information whatsoever at this level of the local analysis. Hence, the remainder of this consideration of the labour market interference of the local programme will concentrate on the evidence that was obtainable at the level of the individual schemes and courses.

The main ways in which YOP might have had an adverse effect on the labour market were identified in the national level analysis as being through substitution and displacement. These particular problems were largely identified with particular sectors of provision. Thus, the abuse of trainees being substituted in some form or another for permanent employees within the organisation of the sponsor was only regarded as being a potential problem in the WEEP sector. Similarly, the possibility of the operation of a scheme leading to the displacement of employees elsewhere was normally only raised as an issue in the context of the non-WEEP work experience sector. In fact, such displacement effects were theoretically possible also in the WEEP sector, but they were most likely to occur where substitution was already taking place and the employer was gaining an unfair competitive advantage through using trainees as 'cheap labour'. Also, with regard to the training course sector, it should be taken into consideration that in so far as these courses involved elements of realistic work experience they too were capable of affecting the labour market adversely, in both or either of these two ways. However, having mentioned these considerations, I propose to sum up separately, first, the evidence of substitution in the WEEP sector, and secondly, that of displacement in the non-WEEP work experience sector.

The visits that I made to individual WEEP schemes in the Portsmouth TWA did not provide much direct evidence of substitution taking place. A single WEEP sponsor acknowledged that on one occasion he had taken on a YOP trainee when otherwise he would have had to hire a permanent employee. However, the lack of such direct evidence is hardly

surprising, given that the only way of obtaining it was to ask the sponsors themselves whether the scheme had affected their normal pattern of recruitment. Yet, equally, this was the only way open to the MSC link officers who were responsible for monitoring the schemes and ensuring that such abuse was not taking place. As was the case with quality, the main point that my visits made me aware of was the virtual impossibility of anybody being able to measure or control what was actually happening in these schemes. Essentially, WEEP sponsors were on trust. So long as they made some attempt to present what they were doing in the required form, they could use the trainees much as they liked, including as substitutes for permanent employees. Although the individual sponsors whom I spoke to denied that this was what they personally were doing, most of them acknowledged that it was a prevalent practice in the area of industry of which they had direct experience, and thought that this was inevitable given the format of the schemes. The national level analysis concluded that the rate of substitution amongst WEEP schemes was probably at least 30 per cent. Those in a position to have an overview of the local programme, such as the Careers Service, put the figure as high as 50 per cent. Yet, only a minute fraction of these schemes were ever closed down. The MSC would investigate any specific complaints, but even then it was virtually impossible to prove that an abuse had taken place, and often all that they could do was to seek the sponsor's assurance that the scheme was being run in accordance with the rules. Obviously, there is room for much speculation as to what the actual rate of substitution was in the local programme. What is clear is that the situation was not under control.

Although there was little evidence of trainees being substituted directly for permanent employees, the programme of visits that I made to individual WEEP schemes did confirm the widespread existence of a more indirect form of substitution. This involved the use of the scheme as a substitute for the sponsor's normal system of recruitment and selection. Regardless of whether in the first place the trainees were substitutes or genuinely additional, the sponsor

could use the scheme as a means of trying out potential employees at public expense and with no obligation upon themselves. In theory, the provision of work experience could still be regarded as being separate from the selection and recruitment of permanent employees, but in practice they merged into a single process. Even if the individual sponsor was not personally using the scheme in this way, there was still a sense in which they could be regarded as testing out the youngsters on behalf of local employers collectively. The implications of this form of interference with the normal workings of the labour market were not necessarily negative in the sense of reducing the total number of job opportunities available. However, neither were they necessarily positive. The principal and most direct effect was to provide employers, either individually or collectively, with a government-funded opportunity to try out young people on 'sale or return'. Indirectly, this may have had some impact on the distribution of job opportunities, both amongst young people themselves, and between young people and adults. However, the effect on the total number of job opportunities available could only have been of the most marginal nature. For employers whose decisions were governed by commercial principles, the fact that they had been given the opportunity to try out a young person beforehand was unlikely to prove the decisive factor in persuading them to create an additional job, however good the trainee had turned out to be. Certainly, whatever marginal increase in the total number of jobs available may have come about through this means, it would not have been of the same scale as the most conservative estimate of number of permanent jobs being destroyed by means of the direct substitution of WEEP trainees. Thus, WEEP schemes were interfering with the normal workings of the labour market principally by offering employers an additional sorting mechanism for the selection of new recruits. But, there were also side-effects on the total number of job opportunities available, of which the negative were clearly more significant than the positive, though it was impossible to determine the exact scale of either.

With reference to the displacement effects associated with the non-WEEP work experience sector, one would not expect to find direct evidence of these at the level of an individual scheme, since by definition displacement was a problem which manifested itself elsewhere. However, it was possible to examine the areas of activity that were liable to cause displacement, and to establish what precautions were being taken against it. The main area of concern was where schemes in this sector were involved in the commercial production of goods and services. But, beyond this, there was a certain inherent danger of other peoples' jobs being affected by any form of production which was offered to the outside community, whether it was for sale or free. Whether in fact displacement did take place, depended on whether someone would otherwise have been employed, either directly or indirectly, to provide the goods or services being offered by the scheme. The MSC rules, of course, stated that if this was the case then the production should not be undertaken. But the problem was that, given the general lack of information which existed about the local labour market, there was no way of telling for sure what the repercussions of certain activities might be. The general practice seemed to be to attempt to avoid any obvious pitfalls and to consult with the relevant trade unions where necessary. Such procedures were for the most part sufficient to ensure that the displacement effects of these schemes did not become an issue of public controversy. However, this does not mean that displacement was not taking place. In a few cases, such as the unit which produced cheap imitations of well-known toys, the threat posed to other peoples' jobs should have been obvious. In many other cases, it was rather that it was impossible to know what would have happened otherwise, though it was probable that in certain of them someone else would eventually have been employed to do what was being carried out by the scheme. The scale of the problem, however, could by no means be compared with that of job substitution in the WEEP sector. For a start, the non-WEEP work experience sector was in itself much smaller; furthermore, it was only in relation to certain of its activities that there was a serious likelihood of displacement taking place; and, even in these cases, the effect was likely to be both marginal and indirect.

No conclusion can be drawn concerning the overall scale of the adverse labour market interference of the local programme. What can be said, and is of importance, is that in both of the two work experience sectors (and by implication equally in the work experience elements of the training course sector) there were inherent dangers of permanent jobs being destroyed: yet, at the level of individual schemes, there was no adequate way of controlling these dangers; and, at the level of the local labour market as a whole, there was no means whatsoever of measuring their overall impact.

If the answers to these first three questions of relevance, quality and labour market interference are now considered together, the overall impression that emerges is one of lack of information, resources, planning and control. At the national level, the sheer scale of numbers involved gave the impression of YOP being a massive intervention. At the local level, the numbers still appeared to be relatively large but it could be seen more clearly how minimal the real content was of most of the places, and hence the impression given at the national level was to a large extent reversed. The local programme was essentially an ad hoc mobilisation of existing resources, and as such it was caught between opposing sets of limitations. On the one hand, in so far as the provision was both realistic and relevant, there was an inherent tendency for it to substitute in one form or another for what might otherwise have taken place through the normal workings of the local labour market. Yet on the other hand, in so far as the provision was genuinely additional, it could for the most part only make use of staff and resources which were redundant within the local economy, and hence it tended to be both artificial and irrelevant.

4. Quality Improvement Initiatives

The next question that needs to be considered concerns the impact of the various quality improvement initiatives at the local level. The fact that the local case study was carried out during the final year of YOP made it possible in particular to assess the difference made by the introduction of the New Training Places. In summing up the conclusions of this assessment, it is necessary initially to consider separately the NTPs provided by the upgraded schemes of the non-WEEP work experience sector, and those provided by the Work Skills Courses, most of which were based in the training course sector.

The evidence that I collected from the NTP work experience schemes suggested that the differences made by the up-grading process were largely of a superficial nature affecting the way in which activities were presented and described rather than essential nature of what was taking place. It has already been noted that quality within YOP depended less upon formal structures than upon factors such as staff and resources. The upgrading process substantially redefined the formal structures of these schemes in accordance with the requirements of a high quality vocational training programme, but it did virtually nothing to alter the more fundamental limitations upon the quality and relevance of provision. There was no substantial upgrading of the staffing and resourcing of the schemes. For example, working under the same conditions and with very little extra training, staff who had been hired off the unemployment register to supervise various forms of rudimentary work experience were suddenly expected to take on the role of high quality trainers. It seemed to be hoped that the introduction of devices and techniques such as Basic Skills Checklists and Trainee Centred Reviewing would make the crucial difference. However, these were often too complex or too subtle to be used effectively by the supervisors at the ground level. What appeared to be happening was that they were going through the motions of the new procedures while in fact continuing largely as before. This was not necessarily a bad thing. It could be argued that the new emphasis

on formal vocational training which was being imposed on these schemes was interfering with what these schemes were best able to do, which was to provide some of the less able trainees in the programme with a basic form of work socialisation in a protected environment under the supervision of caring but ordinary adult workers. In this respect, the model of Community Industry, which did not have any pretensions to high quality vocational training, was perhaps more appropriate for most of these schemes. Certainly it was if their new aspirations were not to be backed where it counted, in terms of staff and resources. The only real exception was of course the ITEC, which as we have seen was exceptional precisely because it had been designed, resourced and staffed from the outset as a high quality training provision.

Turning now to the Work Skills Courses, their introduction seems to have made a more significant impact. They could simply be regarded as a combination of an extended Short Training Course with a six month WEEP scheme. However, the doubling the length of the training element, and its integration with an external work experience placement, appeared to have an effect on the overall quality of the provision which amounted to more than the sum of the different component parts involved. Having said this, certain reservations must be expressed about the nature and relevance of the quality of this provision. The extended length of the formal training course element was often being used by its providers to intensify the nature of the training taking place in accordance with the traditional model of an apprenticeship, rather than to broaden the range of skills involved as required by the MSC's conception of quality improvement. Moreover, the additional training resources which were available to provide for this extension of formal training course provision tended to be concentrated in the traditional areas of industry where there had been a sharp decline in the number of apprentices. Thus, it could be argued against the local provision of Work Skills Courses that, although in a certain sense it represented a significant upgrading of the quality of training available, it

only did so by reproducing a traditional form and pattern of high quality skills training which was unlikely to be relevant to the future needs of the local labour market.

Whatever the strengths or weaknesses of Work Skills Courses, they were of limited importance in the long run, since their development turned out to a temporary feature which was not to extend on a significant scale beyond the final year of YOP. All of the NTPs of course were originally intended as pilots for the Youth Training Scheme. However, the six months of formal training content made the Works Skills Courses expensive to run on a large scale, as well as there being doubts about their fulfilling the MSC's objectives for high quality training within the new scheme. Thus, by the time that I was examining these courses, it was already clear that they were not going to fit in with the main pattern of provision for YTS, where the minimum requirement of 13 weeks off-the-job-training was obviously going to become the norm.

The demise of Work Skills Courses illustrates a more general point which can be made with regard to the impact at the local level of a number of quality improvement initiatives that were intended to prepare YOP for the transition to YTS. The development work necessary for the local implementation of these initiatives was often a slow and painstaking business, and in some cases it was only just as YOP was ending that it was beginning to have a real impact. Yet, by this time, the conception of YTS at the national level had changed so as to render this local development no longer strictly relevant to the latest blueprint for the future. As a result, it seemed that much of the work that had been carried out to improve the quality of the local programme, rather than contributing to the preparation for YTS, was having to be thrown up and abandoned in the face of the imminent arrival of the new scheme. One such example was the 'Exemplary Projects' initiative concerning the co-ordination of off-the-job-training, and it seemed likely that the training system being developed for college staff on the basis of the 'Robinson Shilling' would be another. To a certain extent the whole of the New Training Place development can be regarded in this light.

Although there were some employer-based Work Skills Courses, the vast majority of the NTPs that were developed during the last year of YOP were based either in the non-WEEP work experience sector or the training course sector. Yet, when it came to the introduction of YTS, these two sectors (as Modes B₁ and B₂ respectively) were to account for only about a quarter of the total provision, while the remaining three-quarters was made up by the employer-based (Mode A) sector. In this respect, the so-called 'pilot' places of the final year of YOP were as much a diversion as a preparation for YTS, and this was a cause of considerable resentment amongst certain local providers. The main casualties, as we have seen, were the Work Skills Courses. Most of the upgraded work experience schemes were to survive to take their place in YTS, but in these cases doubt must be expressed as to how significant the upgrading process had really been. Overall, it must be concluded that the amount of quality improvement which took place under YOP that was relevant to the future development of YTS was by no means as large as might have appeared from the national perspective.

5. Implications for YTS

The final question to be considered concerns the implications for the implementation of the Youth Training Scheme at the local level of the conclusions that have been drawn from each of the previous questions about YOP. The overall impression that has been built up of the local programme has been one of a multitudinous variety of provision which, underlying the formal structures, developed in a largely unplanned and uncontrolled manner depending upon whatever resources happened to be most readily available. Whatever criticisms may be made about this development, particularly about the lack of control over its side-effects, it can be understood as a reflection of YOP's essential nature as a special programme. For YTS, however, there could be no such excuse. If the transition was to be made from special programme to comprehensive, high quality training scheme, it would require a far greater degree of positive planning and control at the local level. The key factors in this would be relevance and quality. As far as labour market interference was concerned, it could be said that the damage had already been done by YOP. The way in which YTS was set up recognised that there was no longer a 'normal' youth labour market. The question now was whether the interference which had taken place previously could be brought under control and given a certain retrospective justification. This would depend crucially on the planning and control of the relevance and quality of provision at the local level.

No real effort was made to plan systematically the relevance of local YOP provision, and none would have been worthwhile given the lack of up-to-date and detailed local labour market information. For YOP, a rough and ready correspondence was probably good enough. But, if the implementation of YTS was to bring about the transition from special programme to proper vocational training scheme, more was needed. The vocational training content of YTS was of course intended to be broad-based and adaptable to changing future needs.

However, this did not obviate the need for it to be planned systematically to relate at a certain level of generality to an analysis of the likely future needs of the local labour market. Thus, if the vocational training content of YTS was to be organised on the basis of Occupational Training Families, in order to ensure that it was relevant there would have to be some form of up-to-date local labour market analysis that could at least be translated in terms of OTFs. At the time that I was undertaking my research in the Portsmouth TWA, no such analysis existed and nor was there any imminent prospect of one being made. The most that can be said is that the need for this kind of information was increasingly being recognised. After the completion of my local case study, in September 1983, a study group (on which the MSC was represented) had been set up to examine the training needs and job destinations of young people in the Portsmouth TWA, as well as the training resources in the local community and the current situation and future prospects of the local economy. The report made by this study group concluded as follows:

"Throughout the investigations that have taken place to produce this report a common thread had emerged - in almost every aspect under consideration there is insufficient and at best out of date information available. The desire to rectify this is the prime recommendation of the Study Group". (5)

When this was being stated, YTS was already at the end of its first year of existence, and the implication was that the systematic planning of its relevance to the local labour market was still a distant prospect.

The main conclusion drawn about the quality of provision at the local level of YOP concerned the extent to which it could neither be formally defined, nor systematically measured and controlled, but depended upon the individual circumstances of particular schemes and courses. The problem to be faced in the implementation of YTS

was that of how to make quality systematic throughout the range of local provision. The formal requirements of the new scheme were of course to be more exacting and more detailed than those of YOP, but already we have seen with the New Training Places during the final year of YOP that up-graded specifications could not necessarily guarantee quality improvement. However, it must be acknowledged that YTS also involved a number of important innovations, such as managing agencies and accredited centres for staff training, which were likely to have a considerable impact upon the problem of quality control at the local level. The detailed implications of these changes cannot be discussed in this context. What can be said, on the basis of the evidence of this local case study, is that at the end of YOP there was still almost everything to be done, and whatever new formal requirements or systems of control were introduced with YTS, it would require considerable time, energy and resources before a high level of quality could be systematically combined with relevance throughout the whole range of local provision. YOP had provided the numbers, but otherwise YTS was having to start virtually from scratch.

One final point must be made. Most of the conclusions drawn from this case study have been critical, and have emphasised the limitations and problems of the local programme. It should not, however, be thought that the existence of these limitations and problems meant that the trainees did not benefit from the programme. At the national level of analysis, it was noted that surveys and research had shown that, even if they did not get jobs, most trainees were satisfied with their experience of the programme and had received a certain boost to their psychological well-being. The direct contact that I had with both trainees and their supervisors during my visits to schemes and courses confirmed this impression. Even if the quality and relevance of provision was not all that it might have been, and the trainees felt that they were being exploited as cheap labour,

for most of them it was far better than being unemployed. At the very least, in the short term it gave some purpose and structure to their lives, plus a few pounds more than they could expect to get on the dole. The importance of this in personal terms should not be underestimated. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that for certain individuals the programme brought considerably greater and more long-term benefits. Yet, such personal and individual benefits were not inconsistent with the fact that from a wider perspective, the programme appeared to have no positive long-term impact on the position of young people as a whole within the labour market. The tragedy was that individual young people's expectations had been reduced to the extent that YOP was their only positive option, and yet the programme was incapable of affecting the overall situation of mass youth unemployment which was responsible for this state of affairs.

Footnotes

1. A final attempt was made to obtain these figures in March 1984, but they were still not available.
2. Also, the reliability of these figures was open to question. They did not appear to be actively used for any specific purpose.
3. Community Industry was a scheme which operated outside the formal regulations of YOP and had its own distinct philosophy. As such, it provided an interesting perspective for comparison and contrast. For more details, see below, Appendix, pp. 512-513.
4. See below, Appendix, pp. 464-466.
5. Portsmouth TWA Training Study Group Report, The Local Economy - An Assessment of Jobs and Training Particularly For Young Persons, City of Portsmouth Planning Department, 1984, p.12, para 7.

Chapter 7THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE YOUTH
OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME IN ITS
CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
ENVIRONMENT1. Summary Assessment of YOP

The development and performance of the Youth Opportunities Programme in relation to its original objectives has now been assessed at both the national and local levels. The principle task of this chapter will be to consider the significance of YOP's history and achievements in the wider context of its contemporary political and economic environment. First, however, it is necessary to draw together into a more concise and analytical form the assessments that have been made so far.

The major achievement of YOP was the sheer scale of the provision that it made available. The number of entrants rose from 162,000 in its first year to over half a million in each of the last two years, and in total over 1.8 million young people were catered for by the programme over its five year history. Given the way in which unemployment rose beyond all expectations, the substantial fulfilment of the school leavers undertaking in each of its five years was a truly remarkable performance. It must, however, be qualified by consideration of the comparative failure of the two secondary undertakings to the longer term young unemployed - a failure compounded by the incomplete and misleading way in which their results were reported. Also, it should be taken into account that there was a growing number of refusers amongst those offered a place on the programme. Nevertheless, the outstanding feature was the huge number of young people who were successfully placed on the various schemes and courses.

The significance of this numerical achievement of course depended upon the value of what the schemes and courses were able to provide. If the provision had no value at all, then its scale was irrelevant - 1.8 million times zero equals zero. Much of the data presented at

both national and local levels of analysis has cast doubt on the positive value of YOP provision in relation to its stated objectives. Yet, before setting out the conclusions drawn from this evidence, it is necessary to make one point clear. In whatever other ways YOP may have failed, it succeeded in providing a large number of young people with some positive alternative to the utter waste and frustration of being unemployed. Thus, the evidence available at both national and local levels indicated that, despite the growing numbers of refusers and protesters, most trainees valued YOP as a positive experience which was clearly better than being on the dole. This may not seem to be saying very much, but to the individual young people concerned it could mean an immense amount in personal terms, even if the effect was only temporary.

The success of YOP that has been described so far was as a social programme. It managed to a remarkable extent to keep up with the rapidly growing scale of need amongst the young unemployed and was able to provide the vast majority of those who entered with some form of immediate relief. Yet, as such, it can only be considered as a palliative. Something more was required if the programme was to fulfil a positive economic function.

The principle economic objective originally set for YOP was to enhance the employability of its trainees, as measured by their employment placement rates when surveyed after leaving. This objective and the means of its assessment were inherited from YOP's predecessor, the Work Experience Programme, which had performed very successfully in these terms. YOP, however, was unable to repeat this success. The average employment placement rate of 42% was only just over half of that achieved by WEP, and six months after leaving the programme, YOP trainees were almost as likely to be unemployed as in employment. This comparative failure could of course be explained largely by the general deterioration in employment prospects which took place during YOP's five year lifespan. Yet, by the same token, YOP could not be held solely

responsible for the limited success that it registered in these terms. At both national and local levels, there was evidence to suggest that most of the trainees who were placed in permanent employment would have found a job anyway. Moreover, of those that would not have done so, the vast majority were helped by YOP at the expense of other young people and adults who were deprived of jobs as a result. Such redistribution of employment between individuals and age groups, although indicative of YOP's capacity to enhance employability, cannot really be regarded as having a net positive economic effect. In so far as it was of any significance, it was rather another aspect of YOP's impact as a social programme involving the distribution of jobs towards those considered to be in most need of them. Indeed, the enhancement of trainee's employability could only have a real economic impact in so far as it led to the creation of employment which would not otherwise have existed, and there was little evidence of this taking place on a significant scale. Thus, not only was YOP's performance disappointing in relation to its principle economic objective of enhancing employability as measured by the trainees' employment placement rates, it was also of little positive economic significance even in so far as it was successful in these terms.

YOP's secondary claim to having a real economic function was as a training programme, or rather as a programme with a substantial training content. This depended in the first place on the overall balance of the programme between elements of work experience and training, and secondly on the scope available to individual trainees for planned progression between the different elements. But, given that YOP never obtained its intended balance of provision and hence was rarely able to offer planned progression to individual trainees, in the last analysis the claim depended upon various aspects of the intrinsic quality of the separate elements of provision, particularly of the work experience schemes which accounted for the vast majority of the places on the programme. At the national

level of analysis, three quantitative gauges were established to measure aspects of quality with particular reference to work experience schemes. These were: the percentage of work experience trainees receiving off-the-job training, the volume of training of sponsors' staff being undertaking, and the frequency of monitoring visits to work experience schemes. On all three counts, the performance of YOP over its five year lifespan appears to have been highly disappointing and unsatisfactory, particularly with regard to the WEEP sector which until the final year accounted for roughly two-thirds of the total provision throughout the programme. The evidence from the local case study, on the one hand, demonstrated that quality of content at the level of individual schemes and courses did not depend upon the formal elements of content as defined and quantified at the national level of analysis. Yet, on the other hand, it reinforced the impression gained from such quantitative gauges that the quality of provision was by no means under systematic control. It also demonstrated, despite there being a certain rough and ready correspondence, that there was neither the information nor the resources available for the relevance of the programme to be planned systematically in relation to the needs of a particular local labour market. Thus, at both national and local levels, it would appear that the balance and content of the programme was determined largely by whatever happened to be most readily and cheaply available to provide the necessary number of places. As a result, YOP's contribution to its secondary economic function of training must be judged as having been both marginal and sporadic in relation to the overall scale of provision.

What then was the net economic impact of YOP? In terms of its two explicitly stated economic objectives relating to the employability and training of young people, the positive impact of the programme appears to have marginal. Against this has to be considered the negative impact of the various abuses and side-effects which accompanied the operation of the programme. Evidence at the national level suggested that the rate of permanent job substitution

on WEEP schemes was at least 30%, and from the local case study it became clear that this form of abuse was not under control and could well have been taking place at a considerably higher rate. Even where such abuse was not necessarily taking place, the principle effect of these schemes was to provide employers with a means of testing out potential recruits at public expense and with few obligations upon themselves. This in itself did not reduce the number of permanent jobs available, but neither did it directly increase them: it merely added an extra stage to the sorting process through which the young people had to go. Although the threat of substitution only really applied within the WEEP sector, wherever else the programme was offering realistic work experience there was an inherent danger of permanent jobs being lost through displacement. The scale of this problem was certainly not comparable with that of substitution, but once again at the local level it was clear that it was not fully under control. Obviously, it is impossible to make any exact estimate for the overall rate of job loss associated with YOP, but from all the evidence available it must be concluded that the net effect of the programme was to destroy permanent jobs at a considerably higher rate than it created them. Moreover, even if only young people's jobs were taken into account, there would still be a significant net job loss, since it was mainly their jobs that were affected by substitution. These conclusions were corroborated by the evidence of the national unemployment statistics. In the first place, these figures provided no indication of YOP having had any long-term impact on the employability of young people, either absolutely or relative to the population as a whole. But more than this, the immediate effect on the level of youth unemployment was considerably less than might have been expected purely on the basis of the number of young people temporarily taken out of the labour market. Thus, it was not just that YOP had little positive effect in terms of permanent jobs; because of the abuses and side-effects, it had a net negative effect, even in terms of young people's jobs. Moreover, the only positive economic effect that

could be balanced against this was that of the programme's sporadic and marginal training content. It is arguable therefore that the net economic impact of YOP was negative, destroying more job opportunities than it created, and failing to provide a systematic and substantial training content.

These factors underlay the crisis of credibility in the development of YOP which took place at approximately the half-way point of the programme's scheduled five year lifespan. This crisis could be analysed in terms of each of the three main principles of MSC policy: the combination of both social and economic functions in an active manpower policy, the limitation of direct intervention in the labour market, and the maintenance of a corporatist/voluntarist style of policy-making and implementation. In terms of all three principles YOP was failing and, because of its huge growth in the context of cutbacks taking place elsewhere, the resulting crisis was one which extended to MSC policy as a whole. The solution to this crisis was found in the relaunching of YOP towards becoming a comprehensive training programme for school leavers. This was achieved in theoretical terms through the integration of YOP's future development within the framework of the New Training Initiative, leading to the design of the Youth Training Scheme as YOP's successor. However, the reality of the relaunch depended upon the implementation of quality improvements, both in order to develop YOP in the direction of having a credible positive economic function as a high quality training programme, and to bring under control the abuses and side-effects that were responsible for the negative aspects of its economic impact.

Although a considerable amount of research and development work relating to various aspects of quality improvement had already been embarked upon, most of it was by no means ready to be implemented when the relaunching of the programme was first formally announced during the latter half of its third year. Hence, the Quality

Improvement Plan which was drawn up as a direct response could be little more than a holding exercise while the developmental work continued on these various quality initiatives. It was not until the final year, with the New Training Places, that systematic measures of quality improvement were implemented on a significant scale nationally. Yet, the evidence from the local case study suggested that even this development was not as important as it appeared to be from the national perspective. Although upgraded in their formal content, the NTPs did not for the most part avoid the fundamental limitations on quality and relevance which stemmed from the basic conditions of staffing and resourcing YOP provision. Furthermore, as with certain other quality improvement initiatives implemented at the local level, the form in which many of these NTPs were developed was incompatible with that which was eventually to be adopted by the Youth Training Scheme. Thus, on the evidence of the local case study, it appeared that at the end of the final year of YOP there was still almost everything to be done in order to transform the loosely planned and controlled pattern of provision on the ground into the systematic high quality training scheme that YTS was intended to become.

2. The Changed Political and Economic Environment

It will be remembered that in Chapter 3 it was concluded that the various special measures introduced during the latter half of the 1970s played the same basic role as their historical counterparts; they were palliatives, which, by acting against the strict logic of macro and micro-economic policies failing to secure full employment, helped to make these policies more acceptable by providing a limited amount of relief from the resulting unemployment. This palliative role of modern special measures was linked to the immediate political context of the 1974-79 Labour Government and its social contract relationship with the trade union movement. In return for trade union cooperation over incomes policy, the Government was pledged to do something about unemployment. However, it was not prepared to undertake a significant reflation of the economy, so instead it resorted to a series of special measures. (1)

In this preliminary analysis, which preceded the detailed examination of the development and performance of the Youth Opportunities Programme, the launching of YOP was regarded as the culmination of this series. Yet, it was noted that in certain respects the role of YOP as a palliative was not as clear as had been the case with some previous special measures. In the first place, the objectives of enhancing employability and providing training gave the programme what appeared to be a more plausible real economic function. Secondly, the particular political context in which the previous special measures had played their role as palliatives was already beginning to break down as YOP was being planned and, with the final collapse of the social contract and the subsequent electoral defeat of the Labour Government, had completely disappeared within a year of the programme's launch.

The subsequent examination of the development and performance of YOP has shown that in fact the programme failed to fulfil a significant positive economic function in relation to either of the

two objectives of enhancing employability and providing training. Indeed, the success of the programme appeared to be confined to its social function of providing some form of immediate relief to large numbers of the young unemployed. Moreover, because of the various abuses and side-effects, it was arguable that the net economic effect was negative. These conclusions would tend to confirm that, as with the previous special measures, YOP's principle role was as a palliative. Yet, this needs to be understood in the apparently very different political context in which YOP operated for the majority of its five year lifespan. Furthermore, it needs to be asked whether under these changed political circumstances the programme did not have any other more positive role to play.

It is widely recognised that the election in May 1979 of a Conservative Government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher marked an important turning point in post-war British political history. The commonly held view is that this Government made a decisive break from what could be described as either the Keynesian or social democratic consensus which had underlaid the policies of all previous post-war governments whether Labour or Conservative. Whilst up to a point this analysis can be agreed with, the nature of the break needs to be more closely defined. As far as this account is concerned, the key element in the original definition of the post-war consensus was the 1944 White Paper on Employment Policy. This, it will be remembered, committed all the main political parties represented in the war-time Coalition Government to accept responsibility for the maintenance of a high level of employment, and detailed what was basically a Keynesian style of macro-economic demand management as the policy by which this aim should be pursued. The question of when governments first began to withdraw from this commitment has already been discussed, and although no firm conclusion was reached as to the origins of the withdrawal, it was considered to be obvious that the commitment was already in effect dead by the time that YOP was launched in 1978. (3) How then, it might be asked in this respect, could the

incoming Conservative Government a year later be regarded as having made a decisive break from the past?. The answer to this question is to be found primarily at the level of ideology rather than political practice. Whilst the Callaghan Labour Government had been prepared to carry on tolerating high levels of unemployment without making a serious response in terms of a macro-economic policy of reflation, it still accepted that the attempt to regulate the level of employment by such means was a legitimate and feasible aim of government policy. In contrast, the Thatcher Conservative Government was prepared to deny that it could have any such direct responsibility for the overall level of demand within the labour market. This denial constituted a rejection of the fundamental premiss of Keynesian economic theory that had underlaid the policies of all previous post-war governments. Some of these might have failed to use the various tools of macro-economic demand management to secure full employment, but none yet had gone so far as to declare either that it was improper to attempt to do so, or that it was impossible to succeed.

The 'new' economic theory which underlay the Thatcher Government's wholesale rejection of Keynesian demand management policy was of course monetarism. Despite the technical nature of many of the arguments concerned with the definition and control of the money supply, the fundamental differences between monetarist and Keynesian economics can be explained in comparatively simple terms. Samuel Britten, the financial journalist who did much to popularise monetarist ideas in this country, made the distinction as follows:

"Orthodox 'demand management' has been based on the view that governments have the power to fix the amount of unemployment at a politically chosen level by monetary and fiscal policy. The most fundamental of the 'monetarist' contentions is that governments do not have such powers. The minimum sustainable level of unemployment is on the contrary, determined by the functioning of the labour market. Attempts to push the unemployment percentage below this sustainable level will lead not merely to inflation, but to an increasing rate of inflation and ultimately to currency collapse". (4)

This latter point should be noted in relation to what was said in Chapter 1, about the Phillips curve. (5) It will be remembered that the curve illustrated what was claimed to be a constant relationship between rates of unemployment and rates of inflation. Thus, for any given rate of unemployment it was assumed that there corresponded a set rate of inflation. The events of the sixties and seventies, during which rising unemployment was accompanied by higher rates of inflation, proved this assumption to be wrong. The explanation given by advocates of monetarism such as Britten was that the original 'naive' version of the Phillips Curve had neglected to take account of the cumulative effect of inflation upon people's expectations. (6) Originally it might have been true that a set rate of inflation would be associated with the reduction of unemployment below a certain level. But, if it was attempted to maintain unemployment at this low level, people would sooner or later come to expect the associated rate of inflation. Once they did so, it would become assumed as the base rate at the start of any negotiations, and the continued inflationary effect of the low level of unemployment would then be added on top of this, thus being doubled. Furthermore, eventually this double rate would become the norm and therefore itself be redoubled, and then redoubled again and so on ad infinitum. Thus, according to this argument, the attempt to maintain unemployment below a certain level was not merely associated with inflation, but with accelerating inflation which ultimately would lead to currency collapse.

The level below which unemployment could not be lowered without leading to this ultimate disaster was referred to by the monetarists as the 'minimum sustainable' or 'natural' rate of unemployment. According to their argument, this was determined by inherent factors in the labour market and could not in the long run be

altered by the external stimulus of monetary and fiscal policies. These forms of demand management might succeed in reducing unemployment below its 'natural' rate in the short-term, but once the rate of inflation began to accelerate they would soon have to be reversed. This deflationary policy would then give rise to a 'transitional' rate of unemployment which was above the minimum determined by the labour market and which would last until the inflation was brought back under control. When this was eventually achieved, it would be back to square one with unemployment at its 'natural rate'.

Underlying this argument there is an important assumption which should be noted. It will be remembered that during the fifties, when the problem of inflation associated with full employment policy was raised in terms of the original 'naive' Phillips curve, the way out of this conflict of interests was seen to lie in some form of agreement on incomes restraint. If such means could have been made effective against a constant rate of inflation, then there was no reason why they should not have been able to stop the development of accelerating inflation. Thus, the monetarist argument relied on the assumption that all forms of incomes policy were necessarily ineffective. As was the case with the basic argument concerning accelerating inflation, empirical backing for this assumption appeared to be provided by the experience of the sixties and seventies. Thus there had been a succession of attempts to control inflation through both voluntary and statutory incomes policies, all of which had ended in failure. The final example was of course provided by the events which prepared the way for the election of the Thatcher Government - the collapse of the social contract and the 'winter of discontent'.

Closely related to the rejection of all forms of incomes policy was the monetarist doctrine that trade union activity was incapable of having any direct impact on the inflationary process. If trade unions were not responsible for inflation, then there was no need to attempt either to agree with them or to enforce upon

them any form of pay restrictions. The doctrine was derived from a simple application of the laws of supply and demand to the labour market. If trade unions succeeded in using their monopoly powers to raise the price of labour, other things being equal, the direct result of this would be to reduce the total number of people being employed. There would only be an inflationary effect if government chose to intervene in this situation and attempted to use demand management policies to stop unemployment rising to the new level being determined by the labour market. But then this inflation could be understood as being the direct result of the government policy of attempting to maintain unemployment below its 'natural rate', and by no means a necessary consequence of the use of trade union power.

What emerges from these arguments is a clear division of responsibility between government and trade unions with regard to unemployment and inflation. On the one hand, governments cannot be held responsible for unemployment, but are responsible for inflation. On the other hand, trade unions have no responsibility for inflation, but can be responsible for unemployment. Significantly, this division of responsibilities represented a complete reversal of that associated with the social contract, according to which it was the government that was to take action to control unemployment in return for voluntary pay restraint on behalf of the trade unions aimed at curbing inflation. Moreover, this difference was not simply a reversal. The social contract was an agreement that was based on consensus. As such, it represented another development in the wider trend of post-war corporatist politics that has already been described. The principles of monetarist economics, however, eliminated both the basis and the need for this consensus-based corporatist style of politics. On the one hand, government could no longer promise to control unemployment; on the other hand, there was no need for it to ask the trade unions to exercise restraint over pay. All the government could

or should do was control inflation, which according to strict monetarist principles could be achieved purely through the control of the growth of money supply. Otherwise, everything else had to be left up to market forces, and it was up to the trade unions if they chose 'to price themselves out of jobs'. (7) Thus, laissez-faire economics were substituted for consensus politics.

The break with the post-war consensus made by the Thatcher Government can now be summarised. At the level of economic theory, it involved the replacement of Keynesian demand management orthodoxy concerning government responsibility for the control of unemployment, by monetarist-style laissez-faire principles concerned exclusively with the control of inflation. In terms of politics, this implied the rejection of what might be described as the social-democratic consensus on consensus politics itself. Yet, once again, it is necessary to sound a note of caution with regard to this summary. The pre-U-turn Heath Government had stepped back from consensus politics and experimented with laissez-faire economics. Furthermore, the Callaghan Labour Government had at least flirted with certain aspects of monetarism, introducing for example published monetary targets. But, in both cases, these were pragmatic measures of experimentation and crisis management, which at most represented deviations from the overarching post-war consensus. (8) The decisive difference in the case of the Thatcher Government was that such tactics were elevated to the level of absolute principles. This time there was 'no alternative' and there could be 'no U-turn'.

3. Thatcherism and the M S C

The question which must now be addressed is how this decisive change in the economic and political environment affected the position of the Manpower Services Commission. It will be remembered that, when the origins of the MSC were analysed in Chapter 1, three major themes were identified. First, the establishment of the Commission to coordinate a comprehensive manpower policy was regarded as a significant step forward in the development of active manpower policy, which itself was interpreted as being a means of micro-economic fine-tuning within the macro-economic framework of Keynesian demand management policy. Secondly, the tripartite structure of the Commission was regarded as an example of corporatism, the modern development of which was related on a political dimension to the same macro-economic context as the development of active manpower policy. Finally, the status of the Commission as a semi-autonomous or quasi-governmental body was explained as an outcome of the trend of administrative reform referred to as 'hiving off', which could be understood as a means of enabling corporatist development.

What should now be obvious is that the Thatcher Government's decisive break from the post-war consensus was a break from the economic and political context within which the origins of the MSC have been analysed. Thus, it involved the rejection of both the Keynesian macro-economic framework within which active manpower policy was set and the associated style of consensus-based corporatist politics which had given rise to the tripartite structure of the MSC. What is more, with regard to the third theme of hiving off, a significant aspect of the successful 1979 election campaign of the Conservative Party had been the attack mounted on the so-called 'quangos', including bodies such as the MSC which were the products of this trend of administrative reform. The 'great quango hunt', as it became known, requires some further explanation. (9)

The original stimulus for the trend of hiving off, it will be remembered, was provided by the Fulton Report which proposed it as a possible means of applying the principles of managerial accountability to certain aspects of public administration. This proposal was taken up by the Heath Government, and the MSC was one of the most important examples of its implementation. Yet even as the Commission was being established, concern was mounting about the proliferation of such quasi-governmental bodies. (10) Ironically, much of this concern was centred on the issue of accountability. Although the establishment of accountable units responsible for particular functions might enhance managerial accountability, once they were hived off from central government, it raised certain questions about public accountability. The position of quasi-governmental bodies in relation to the traditional systems of ministerial and parliamentary accountability was not always clear, and yet there was no other means of ensuring their accountability to the public. Hence, concern was increasingly expressed by commentators on public administration about the unregulated growth of a diverse sphere of quasi-government, responsible for large amounts of public expenditure without necessarily being subject to a clear system of public accountability. (11) This concern was subsequently taken up by the Conservative Party, and linked during the 1979 election campaign to a more general attack on the public sector. (12) Privatisation replaced hiving-off as the recommended means of cutting back government bureaucracy, and quasi-governmental bodies were condemned as displaying the worst of both worlds, being beyond conventional public accountability and yet not subject to the discipline of market forces. Clear indications were given that, upon the election of a Conservative Government, there would be a drastic cull of such 'quangos'.

Thus, the prospects of the MSC at the beginning of the first Thatcher Government did not appear to be very promising. Not only had the macro-economic and political frameworks assumed by its policies been removed, but the particular administrative form of which it

was a leading example was under explicit threat. Soon after the election, the Prime Minister asked her Cabinet to prepare lists of quasi-governmental bodies sponsored by their departments that might be abolished, and subsequently a central review was undertaken by Sir Leo Pliatsky. (13) Meanwhile, as we have already seen, the rapid growth of the MSC's expenditure which had taken place under the Labour Government was checked by the imposition of the first round of public expenditure cuts in June 1979. It might have seemed therefore that the future of the MSC was in some doubt. In fact, it never was. The Pliatsky Report, which was published in January 1980, had little impact on either the MSC in particular or the wider problem of quasi-government in general, and thereafter little more was heard about the so-called 'quango-hunt'. The MSC did not only survive, it flourished. Despite the initial cuts imposed on the planned growth of its expenditure, by the final year of the first Thatcher Government the total budget of the MSC was more than double what it had been during the final year of the previous Labour Government. (14) This compared with a 72 per cent increase in total public expenditure over the same period. (15)

The growth of the MSC over this period was of course completely accounted for by the growth of its Special Programmes Division, and in particular, the Youth Opportunities Programme. Indeed, over the same five years, there was a substantial reduction in the total budget of the other two divisions which were responsible for the original employment and training services of the Commission. The growth of the SPD need not necessarily be regarded as the direct cause of the cuts in the ESD and TSD, but the two trends can be traced to a common cause - the development of mass unemployment. The way in which the undertakings forced YOP to expand in response to the rapidly rising level of youth unemployment has already been described. In the case of the employment and training services, the impact of rising unemployment was the opposite. The improvement of the Jobcentre network could no longer be justified in terms of the avoidance of labour shortages when there were already millions unemployed. Equally, there was no point in developing training

services when there were few skill shortages for them to fill and rising percentages of the trainees from the existing courses were failing to find employment. Thus, while mass unemployment provided the stimulus for the rapid growth of YOP, it undermined the rationale of the employment and training services. The demise of these traditional MSC services will be described in more detail in the final chapter. The point which needs to be noted now is that, whereas the growth of YOP was determined purely by the scale of need for it as a social programme, the rationale of the employment and training services still depended upon their fulfilling economic as well as social functions, which it will be remembered was the essential feature of an active manpower policy. This suggests that the MSC's continued growth in the context of mass unemployment was the result of the relegation into a secondary position of its original role of coordinating an active manpower policy. The nature of its new principle role of course depended upon YOP. It has already been suggested that, as a huge social programme apparently without any positive economic functions, YOP served primarily as a palliative. Yet, this role still has to be understood in the new political context provided by the Thatcher Government.

4. Thatcherism and the Role of YOP as a Palliative

The origins of the Youth Opportunities Programme and previous special measures have been understood in the political context of the Labour Government's social contract relationship with the trade union movement. The Thatcher Government explicitly rejected this corporatist style of policy-making and had no need to seek the cooperation of the unions with any form of incomes policy. Yet, it could not simply abandon the palliative role of the special programmes which it had inherited. Once YOP had been established and the undertakings set in place, it was a political impossibility to remove them. The special relationship with the unions might no longer exist, but youth unemployment was still a sufficiently sensitive issue with the wider public to rule out the possibility of going back on what had already been promised. Hence YOP not only had to be maintained, but it had to be expanded in response to the rapidly rising levels of unemployment which were the outcome of the Government's wider economic policy. Indeed, the higher the level of unemployment went, the greater was the need for some form of palliative. Thus, the Thatcher Government was drawn into an open-ended commitment to fund the expansion of YOP at whatever level was determined as necessary by the growth of youth unemployment. The crucial factor was of course the school leavers undertaking and this was not only maintained, but improved by the bringing forward of its deadline to Christmas.

Yet, it was not just a matter of being seen by the public to be doing as much, if not more, for the young unemployed than the previous Labour Government. YOP functioned as palliative not only for public opinion, but for the young people themselves. The importance of the programme as a means of keeping the young unemployed off the streets was highlighted by the 1981 riots and the Thatcher Government's reaction to them. Although reluctant to admit any connection between those incidents and the rising level of unemployment, the almost immediate reaction of the Prime

Minister was to announce a new package of special employment measures which included an additional 110,000 places on YOP. (16) The role of YOP in this respect might be compared to that of the generous redundancy payments awarded to certain powerful groups of workers being laid off from public sector employment. (17) The Thatcher Government was clearly prepared to expend large sums of public money in order to pacify certain strategic groups of people whose activities might otherwise have disturbed the prevailing mood of apathy in the face of rising mass unemployment.

As well as providing a means of being seen to be doing something about youth unemployment and at least keeping the young people occupied, it can also be argued that YOP functioned as what might be described as a statistical palliative. At its peak, the programme was taking more than 300,000 young people off the unemployment register, and it was asserted by some critics that its main purpose was to reduce the official figure for the total number of people unemployed. (18) However, the significance of YOP's impact in this respect should not be over-estimated. Given that total unemployment was already over three million, an extra 300,000 would not have made a crucial difference. Nevertheless, if the limited impact of YOP is considered alongside that of other special measures and changes made in the way in which the unemployment statistics were compiled, it can be argued that the programme made a contribution to a wider strategy of 'massaging' the figures which had a more substantial impact. As we have seen, during the programme's five year life span, the headline figure for unemployment in Great Britain rose from 1,387,500 to 3,053,300. Yet, without all the special measures and the changes that were made in the basis of the statistical count, the final figure would have been close to four million. (20) Obviously, one can only speculate as to what would have been the political significance of this extra million on the official figures. But, whatever the absolute level reached, clearly it was important for the Thatcher Government during the latter half of its first term to create the

impression that the worst was over and that unemployment was at least beginning to level off. The expansion of YOP and other special measures, combined with the changes in the method of the count, helped to create this impression.

The role of YOP as a palliative can now also be analysed in the context of the monetarist economic strategy that was being pursued by the Thatcher Government. (21) The key to this strategy was of course the control of inflation. Yet, when the Government was first elected, it was committed to a series of policies which inevitably provided a massive inflationary stimulus. Labour had already let things get out of control in its attempt to win the election, and the Conservative Party added fuel to the fire with its manifesto promises. Thus, the new Government was committed both to increases in certain areas of public expenditure and to cuts in direct taxation. Although some savings could be made in other areas of public expenditure, the only way that the equation could be balanced when it came to the first Budget was through an increase in the rate of V.A.T. from 8% to 15%. This instant jump in the level of indirect taxation gave a huge push to inflation which came on top of the effects of the breakdown of the previous Government's incomes policy. Moreover, the Thatcher administration's commitment to market mechanisms meant that it did not have the option of attempting to impose an incomes policy of its own. Consequently, the immediate result of the Thatcherite takeover was the second highest rise in the annual rate of inflation since 1945.

What happened could simply be understood as the cost of the tactics that were necessary in order to win the election. Yet, paradoxically, it can also be explained in terms of wider economic strategy. It would seem that initially the Thatcher Government had such faith in the efficacy of monetary policy as a means of controlling inflation that it was prepared to ignore all other sources of inflationary stimuli. The belief was that, so long as the money supply was kept under control, it was impossible for inflation to get out of hand, whatever else might be done to stimulate it.

In a certain theoretical sense this might have been true, but only if one was prepared to sacrifice all other economic policy objectives. In reality, the huge stimulus given to inflation during the first year of the Thatcher Government was to be paid for by three successive years of severe deflation, which were necessary merely in order to return to the level of inflation inherited from the previous Labour Government. The cost of this in terms of unemployment we have already seen.

Within monetarist theory, it was expected that the process of bringing inflation back under control would entail a 'transitional' rate of unemployment which was somewhat above the minimum 'natural' rate. What the Thatcher Government's original stimulation of inflation did was to ensure that this so-called transitional rate was far higher than had been anticipated. Nevertheless, whatever the cost, there was a determination not to repeat the U-turn made by the Heath Government in 1972 when unemployment reached the then unacceptable level of one million. This time monetarist doctrine decreed that there was no alternative and that the Government could not be held directly responsible for the level of unemployment. How high the transitional rate rose, and how long it lasted, would depend upon how quickly trade union negotiators adapted to the new circumstances of the labour market and stopped pricing their members out of jobs. Meanwhile, the main responsibility for the Government was to maintain tight monetary and fiscal control, and to resist the mounting pressure for some form of U-turn. Besides repeating that there was no alternative, one means of counteracting such pressure was to attempt to raise the threshold of the acceptability of mass unemployment. The various aspects of YOP's role as a palliative can be understood in this context. By ameliorating the most politically sensitive issue of youth unemployment, keeping the young people off the streets, and contributing to the manipulation of the unemployment statistics, YOP helped to legitimise levels of unemployment which had previously been assumed to be totally unacceptable. This in turn helped the Government to resist the pressure to make a U-turn in its macro-economic strategy. In short, by maintaining the commitment of a special

programmes response to the young unemployed, the Thatcher Government made it easier for itself to continue avoiding any positive macro-economic response to the general unemployment problem.

5. The Alternative Economic Role of YOP

The role of YOP as a palliative can thus be understood in the context of the monetarist economic strategy of the Thatcher Government. The question which next needs to be addressed is whether the programme had any more positive role to play in the context of this wider economic strategy. We have already seen that it failed to fulfil a significant positive economic function in relation to either of its two original objectives of enhancing employability and providing training. Indeed, the evidence has suggested that YOP destroyed permanent job opportunities at a considerably faster rate than it created them without having much redeeming value as a training programme. Thus, looking from the angle of the young people who were meant to be the main beneficiaries, it could be argued that the intended positive economic effects of the programme were outweighed by its negative side-effects. But what if one looks from the angle of the main providers of the programme, the employers?

The vast majority of YOP provision consisted of Work Experience on Employers' Premises. These schemes provided employers with what in effect was the free labour of young people, in return for certain obligations with regard to matters such as training and supervision. Yet, as we have seen, in practice these obligations were of the most minimal nature and could not be properly enforced. The reality revealed by the local case study was that for the most part sponsors were free to select and employ trainees much as they would any normal young recruits. Of course, the taking on of YOP trainees was supposed not to interfere with the normal pattern of recruitment. But, even if it did not, at the very least employers were gaining the temporary use of an extra pair of hands, at no additional expense and with few real obligations. If, however, they were prepared to break the rules by using the trainees in some way as substitutes for permanent employees - and there was no effective means of stopping them from doing so - they could also save

themselves the expense of wages which they would otherwise have had to pay. Furthermore, without necessarily involving a breach of the rules, it was inevitable that YOP should become used by employers as a substitute recruitment and selection system through which they could try out and prepare potential employees at public expense. Thus, while doubt may remain as to what was the actual level of abuse amongst WEEP schemes, it is clear that even if no abuse was involved employers stood to make considerable gains from their participation as sponsors. The exact value of a scheme to its sponsor would of course vary according to a number of other factors, such as the capacity of the trainee, the nature of the work and the amount of training and supervision actually given. But, whatever the case, sponsors were unlikely to get involved if they thought that it would cause them more trouble than it was worth. Understandably, there had to be some incentive. Yet, as the WEEP sector worked in reality, it would appear that there were far more tangible economic benefits to be gained by the employers than the trainees. Even if abuses are not taken into account, the primary effect of these schemes was to subsidise the employers' recruitment and labour costs, and only as an indirect effect of doing so did they open up any permanent job opportunities for young people. Once abuses are taken into account, even on a conservative estimate, then not only is the subsidy being paid to the employers greatly increased, but the indirect benefit to the job prospects of young people is more than cancelled out by the permanent job opportunities lost through substitution. Thus, the only positive and immediate economic effect of the majority element of YOP was to subsidise the recruitment and labour costs of the employers who were directly involved as its sponsors. Since most of these were small employers, it might be regarded as a disguised form of small business subsidy.

As well as this immediate effect of the WEEP sector, there are more long-term and indirect effects of the programme as a whole to be considered. In particular, it is necessary to take into account the impact of the YOP allowance on the level of wages elsewhere in

the youth labour market. (22) The allowance was of course intended to be a training allowance and not a wage. As such, it had originally been set at a level above that of a young persons' social security entitlement, yet clearly below the going rate of youth wages. Yet, as we have seen, the content of YOP as a training programme was to be marginal and for most of the 'trainees' there was to be little difference from working as a normal employee - apart from the level of remuneration. This being the case, and given the eventual scale of YOP's intervention in the youth labour market, the allowance was bound to some extent to become regarded as a base rate or starting point for youth wages. On the one hand, trainees who became used to working for only the level of the allowance had their wage expectations lowered. On the other hand, employers who had access to this form of free youth labour were unlikely to be prepared to pay that much more in addition to the level of the allowance for the privilege of being able to take on a young person as an employee. (23)

If the immediate and longer term economic effects of YOP are thus explained respectively in terms of a subsidy for small businesses and a depressive influence on the wage rate of youth labour, it is not difficult to see how the programme could be regarded as making a positive contribution to the wider economic strategy of the Thatcher Government, beyond the role of a palliative. The provision of incentives to small businesses, and the encouragement of people 'to price themselves back into jobs' both became important adjuncts of the macro-economic policies of monetarism. Each of these requires a brief explanation.

The motive force of the economic recovery which was supposed to follow once inflation had been brought back under control was to be provided by private enterprise, and in particular by small businesses. Yet, as well as the rapidly rising level of unemployment, the cost of the deflationary policies used to control inflation was measured in terms of unprecedented waves of bankruptcies and huge losses of industrial production. Thus, the means which were intended to create

the conditions for economic recovery threatened to destroy the source of its motive force. Faced by this dilemma, and still unwilling to reverse the main thrust of its macro-economic policy, one of the responses of the Conservative Government was to make various forms of direct micro-economic intervention to encourage the start-up and development of small businesses in areas of potential future economic growth. (24) In so far as YOP acted to subsidise the recruitment and labour costs of small businesses, particularly in the service sector, it can be regarded as making a positive contribution to this policy of micro-economic intervention.

The significance of YOP's other main economic effect, as a depressive influence upon the wage rates of youth labour, can be understood in the context of the Thatcher Government's interpretation of the nature and causes of the unemployment problem that it faced. As we have seen, monetarist theory anticipated that the regaining of control over inflation would give rise to a 'transitional' rate of unemployment which was higher than the 'natural' rate determined by the labour market itself. The transitional nature of this higher rate rested on two assumptions: that the policy of deflation would only need to be temporary; and that the labour market would naturally tend to restore a balance between supply and demand through adjustments of the price mechanism. These assumptions were related in so far as the reductions of wage levels necessary to bring down the rate of unemployment were also of major significance to the restoration of control over inflation. Thus, the crucial underlying factor on which the transitional nature of the higher rate of unemployment rested was the degree of downward flexibility of wage rates.

In practice, the process of 'squeezing inflation out of the economy' turned out to be far more lengthy and burdensome than had been expected. It was accompanied by a rate of unemployment that was not only extremely high, but which continued rising without showing any signs of being transitional. Clearly, the spontaneous

self-adjustment of the labour market which had been hoped for by the Government was not taking place. From a monetarist perspective, the main responsibility for this lay with the trade unions. Their activities were blocking the natural adjustments of the market mechanism, and thereby they were pricing both their own members and other workers out of jobs. The Government, of course, was not slow to put forward this argument. However, initially at least, it appears to have been somewhat reluctant to intervene directly in order to curtail the trade union powers which it held to be responsible for the rigidity of the labour market. Ironically, the Thatcher administration's determination not to repeat the Heath Government's U-turn seems to have made it more circumspect about the risk of precipitating a head-on confrontation with the trade union movement.⁽²⁵⁾ Thus, although there was a progressive build-up of employment legislation affecting trade union powers, the approach was always cautious, with the Government feeling its way step by step and rarely going as far as many of its supporters would have liked.

In this context, the role of YOP as a depressive influence upon the wage rates of youth labour can be understood as a means of outflanking rather than directly confronting trade union opposition. The comparatively low level of the allowance established a norm which by-passed and undermined wage rates negotiated by the trade unions for apprentices and other young workers. Thus, in effect, YOP provided a mechanism within the youth labour market through which it was possible to encourage the translation of high rates of unemployment into lower rates of pay. As was demanded by the Thatcher Government's wider strategy, young people were being shown how to price themselves back into jobs.

It is possible, therefore, to demonstrate a certain alignment between both of the main economic effects associated with the operation of YOP and the wider economic strategy of the Thatcher Government. Yet it is necessary to be cautious about taking this

argument one step further and suggesting that this alignment was the result of a deliberate policy. Two objections immediately spring to mind. First, YOP was originally planned and launched, not by the Thatcher administration, but by the previous Labour Government. Secondly, throughout its duration, the programme was actively supported by both the TUC and the vast majority of the wider trade union movement. These two facts, in themselves, do not eliminate the possibility that YOP was deliberately used as an adjunct of the wider economic strategy of the Thatcher Government. But, if such an argument is to be sustained, each of them requires a certain explanation.

6. The Significance of the 1979 General Election

The fact that YOP was the creation of the Callaghan Labour Government, and yet subsequently appears to have been positively aligned with the wider economic strategy of the Thatcher administration, could be explained in two alternative ways. Either there was no fundamental difference between the economic strategies of the two governments, or the programme underwent some fundamental change in between. In relation to the first of these two alternatives, it had already been concluded that, despite the Callaghan Government's flirtation with certain aspects of monetarism, the Thatcher Government's whole-hearted commitment to this doctrine marked a fundamental break from the past. Thus, the main economic effects of YOP, which have been positively aligned with the wider economic strategy of the Thatcher Government, could not have been aligned in the same way in the case of the Callaghan Government. This leaves the alternative that there was some fundamental change in the nature of YOP itself, which can be associated with the change in governments.

The account presented above has already demonstrated at considerable length how the development and performance of YOP differed from what was originally planned. In particular, it should be remembered that the programme to a large extent failed to meet its original objectives, and that the main economic effects which have been identified were apparently side-effects and not originally intended. The question which now needs to be addressed is whether this divergence of the development of YOP away from its original plans can be associated with the change in governments. The answer depends in the first place on the relationship between the timing of these two events.

The Labour Government remained in power for little more than the first year of YOP's five year life-span, and thus can only be held responsible for the original planning and launching of the programme. However, the pattern of YOP's future development, and its divergence away from the plans of the Holland Report, had already to a large extent emerged by the end of this first year. Thus the predominance of the WEEP sector had been established, as had the lack of training content and poor performance in relation to other gauges of quality such as the regularity of monitoring - all features which contributed to the proliferation of YOP's apparently unintended side-effects. Such evidence would seem to suggest that the fundamental break in the programme's development took place in-between the phases of planning and launching, and since both of these were the responsibility of the Labour Government, there would not appear to be any direct association with the change in governments. However, the matter is not quite as simple as that.

The divergence from the original plans which took place during the first year of YOP was regarded at the time as being a temporary aberration, resulting from the particular set of circumstances that were associated with the programme's launch. Thus, the initial predominance of the WEEP sector was explained by its being the easiest and quickest form of provision to set up, combined with the fact that there had already been a large number of pre-existing WEEP schemes. As the programme became more established, it was expected that the other forms of provision would begin to catch up, and the overall balance of the programme would move closer to that which was originally planned. Similarly, the initial lack of training content and poor qualitative performance were put down to teething problems which it was expected would be rectified by the quality improvement plan embarked upon at the beginning of the second year. Thus, although YOP's divergence from its original plans began under the Labour Government, the balance and quality of provision which emerged at the end of this first year had not yet been accepted as permanent. Indeed, it was planned and expected that the future development of the programme would be drawn back in the direction of the original blueprint of the Holland Report. (26)

As it happened, during the second year of the programme, some slight progress was made towards the balance and quality of provision which had originally been planned. But this was soon reversed, and the pattern of provision which emerged during the first year turned out to be permanent throughout the vast majority of the life-time of the programme. Even in the final year, the real difference made by the introduction of the New Training Places was very limited. Two related reasons existed for why the first year's pattern of provision to a large extent persisted throughout; the huge numerical expansion of the programme, and the limitations on the resources which were available for its funding. Arguably, both of these can be associated with the change in government.

As soon as the Conservative Government was elected in June 1979, it imposed cuts on public spending which included the MSC and its Special Programmes Division. These immediately affected the plans which had been laid at the beginning of the second year for the restoration of balance and improvement of quality within YOP.⁽²⁷⁾ Then, in the following two summers, came the upward surges of youth unemployment, which necessitated the rapid expansion of the programme in order to maintain the school leavers undertaking. The Conservative Government guaranteed the resources that were necessary for this, but still imposed severe restraints. As a result, personnel and funds were stretched almost to the limit in providing the required number of extra places, and there was very little that could be done about changing the balance or improving the quality of the provision. Indeed, the predominance of the WEEP sector was reinforced and certain aspects of quality declined, or in the case of the monitoring system, broke down altogether. It was only in the final year, when the number stabilised, that resources could be made available to start the huge task of upgrading the content of provision.

What would have happened to the development of YOP had Labour won the 1979 General Election is of course something which can only be speculated about. However, there are certain facts upon which such

speculation can be based. The total number of unemployed had been falling gradually over the last 18 months of the Labour Government. This, of course, is not to imply that it would have continued to fall if Labour had been re-elected. But, most commentators would acknowledge that the sharp increase of unemployment which took place in 1980 was largely the result of the Thatcher Government's implementation of a monetarist macro-economic strategy, and would not have taken place otherwise. As far as restraint on public expenditure is concerned, this had already begun under the Labour Government. Yet, apparently, neither Callaghan as Prime Minister nor Healey as Chancellor ever turned down a request for more money if it was needed to finance special measures for the young unemployed.⁽²⁸⁾ Indeed, the main financial problem faced by the MSC under the Labour Government was that of underspending its budget. Once again, it is impossible to know for certain to what extent this would have continued if Labour had been re-elected. But, given that Labour did not have the same deep ideological commitment to public spending cuts as the Thatcherite Conservatives, it would seem to be most unlikely that the financial restraints imposed on the MSC would have been so tight. If, at the same time, youth unemployment had not taken off as rapidly as it did in the summer of 1980 and considerably fewer additional places had been required, it is possible to speculate that the programme would have developed very differently from how eventually it did. With only a gradual increase in numbers after the first year and ample funds being made available, it would have been possible to change and improve quite substantially the pattern of provision which emerged from the initial launch, and thereby to a large extent avoid the side-effects that were subsequently to become characteristic of the operation of the programme. Moreover, if the programme had remained on a comparatively limited scale, any impact that it did have upon the normal workings of the youth labour market would have been correspondingly reduced. Thus, although YOP's development away from its original plans and towards its subsequently predominant form began under the Labour Government, a strong argument can be made that it would not have continued to develop in this direction if Labour had been re-elected.

Finally, there are two further changes in the development and performance of YOP which, as far as timing is concerned, can be more straightforwardly associated with the change in governments. The first of these relates to what has been described as originally being YOP's principle economic objective - the enhancement of trainees' employability as measured by their employment placement rates. Although during its first year the programme did not in many ways turn out as originally planned, it did at least perform reasonably well in terms of this principle economic objective. It was only at the beginning of 1980, following the election of the Conservative Government and its introduction of a monetarist macro-economic strategy, that the employment placement rate plunged below 50 per cent. The second of these changes, for which the timing can be directly associated with the change in governments, involves the level of the trainees' allowance. Although under Labour this was originally set well below the average level of youth wages, at least its real value was to be maintained against the rising cost of living. Thus, in November 1978, the YOP allowance was reviewed alongside social security benefits, and as a result increased from £19.50 to £20.55 per week. During the programme's next four years under the Conservative Government, there were only to be two further increases and, unlike the first, neither of these was sufficient to restore the original value of the allowance. Thus, at the end of the fifth and final year of the programme, the level of the allowance stood at £25; whereas, in order to have maintained its real value in terms of the Average Earnings Index, it would have needed to be almost 50 per cent higher at £36.50 (29). This reduction in the value of the allowance which took place under the Conservative Government, combined with the growing scale of the programme's interference with the normal workings of the youth labour market, would of course tend to amplify any depressive effect upon the rate of youth wages.

It can now be concluded that the development of YOP into its predominant form, in which its main economic effects were as a subsidy to small employers and a depressive influence upon youth

wages, was largely the result of the policies of the Thatcher Government, despite there being a certain tendency in this direction under the previous Labour administration. Thus, as well as it being possible to align the two main economic effects of the programme with the wider macro-economic strategy of the Thatcher Government, the development of YOP which gave rise to these effects can be associated specifically with this Government's assumption of power. Yet, these two facts in themselves are not sufficient to establish that there was any deliberate intention on the part of the Thatcher administration to use YOP in a role beyond that of a palliative, as a positive adjunct to its wider macro-economic strategy. It could still be argued that, although YOP's characteristic development was both associated and aligned with this macro-economic strategy, the link was only as that of an unintended consequence.

7. The Question of Government Intent

In the first place, the Conservative Government had little choice but to continue with YOP, if only for its palliative effect. This meant above all the maintenance of the school leavers undertaking. Yet, the Government's macro-economic strategy ensured that the continuance of the programme and its principle undertaking took place under new conditions, involving both rapidly rising youth unemployment and severe restraint on public expenditure. All of the factors which gave YOP its characteristic form under the Conservative Government - the predominance of the WEEP sector, the lack of training content, the poor qualitative performance and the breakdown of the monitoring system, the lack of control of abuses and the interference with the normal workings of the labour market, and finally the sharp decline in employment placement rates and the loss of value of the trainees' allowance - all of these factors can be explained in terms of the combined impact upon the programme of rapidly rising youth unemployment and severe financial restraints. There is no need to suggest that this form of development was deliberately planned so that the programme should contribute more positively to the wider economic strategy of the Government. It could have been that what happened was an unintended consequence, and it was purely fortuitous that the main economic effects contributed so positively to the Government's wider strategy.

What this means is that it cannot be established that the Conservative Government deliberately developed YOP as an adjunct of its monetarist macro-economic strategy, unless specific evidence can be found of its intention to do so. As far as the initial stages of involvement are concerned, no such evidence exists. Thus, there is no reason to believe that the decisions to continue with the programme and to maintain the school leavers undertaking took into account any positive contribution to the Government's wider economic strategy beyond the palliative effect. Originally, it would seem that the factors which were to make such a contribution did genuinely develop as unintended consequences. It was only once

they were established and recognised that the question of Government responsibility necessarily arose.

The original plans in the Holland Report had recognised the danger of YOP interfering with the normal workings of the youth labour market. Substitution and displacement had been referred to, and the possibility had been noted that WEEP might come to be regarded by employers as a useful vehicle for assessment and a normal avenue for recruitment. If this were to happen, it was stated that it might be necessary to review the basis of funding these schemes. (30)

By the third year of YOP, which was the second year of the Conservative Government, it was evident that the programme was interfering substantially with the normal workings of the youth labour market. Not only had it grown in scale far beyond its original plans, but in the majority WEEP sector there was evidence of a substitution rate of 30 per cent or more. Even where there was no such direct abuse, as we have seen, employers were commonly using these schemes as a subsidised means of assessment and recruitment. Yet, no review was undertaken of the basis of the funding of WEEP schemes, and no effective measures were taken to control the abuses. Indeed, the monitoring system was allowed to collapse. This, of course, could be explained once again in terms of the growth in scale of the programme combined with the shortage of resources. But, now that it was apparent that these side-effects were taking place, the Government must be regarded as having some responsibility for allowing them to continue.

It was not simply that the necessary resources were unavailable, it was rather a question of priorities. Extra public money could always be found to enable the programme to meet the politically sensitive school leavers undertaking, yet there was never enough allowed for adequate monitoring and quality control. The way in which the programme developed as a result may not have been deliberately planned by the Conservative Government, but certainly it was knowingly tolerated. Given the positive contribution that it made to the Government's wider economic strategy, this is hardly surprising.

Evidence of deliberate intention going beyond mere toleration is more difficult to establish. However, with regard to the reduction in the real value of the trainees' allowance, there are certain signs that this was deliberately planned, not only to save public expenditure, but as part of a wider strategy to push down the level of youth wages. The Prime Minister, herself, and other leading members of the Conservative Government, repeatedly stated that the reason for the exceptionally high level of youth unemployment was that the differential between youth and adult wages was not large enough to reflect the comparative inexperience of young workers.⁽³¹⁾ Consequently, it was argued, youth wages needed to be lowered in order to price young people back into jobs. The policy which most directly expressed this understanding of the nature of youth unemployment was the Young Workers Scheme. Devised by Margaret Thatcher's personal economic adviser, Professor Alan Walters, this scheme was first announced in July 1981 as part of a package of special measures which also included a large expansion of YOP. Its openly admitted objective was to encourage employers to reduce youth wage rates by offering them subsidies in order to do so. Thus, if an employer was prepared to pay a young person less than £40 a week, they could qualify for a subsidy of £15 a week; if they paid more than this, but still below £45 a week, there was a reduced level of subsidy at £7.50 a week. In short, the scheme set out directly to do those things which have been identified as the indirect effects of YOP's development, to provide subsidies to employers and to encourage reductions in rates of youth pay. The fact that it did so as a deliberate policy, confirms that it was the Conservative Government's intention that these things should happen. But still this intention has to be directly connected to YOP.

The best available evidence of such a connection was provided by a 'Think Tank' report which was leaked to the press during the course of the 1983 General Election campaign.⁽³²⁾ Written some two years earlier, its main concern was with what was to follow YOP. Nevertheless, it made plain that an important aspect in the Government's thinking about both YOP and its successor was the

deliberate intention to use the trainees' allowance as a point of leverage in the wider strategy to force down the level of youth wages. In the case of YOP, this might not have been immediately obvious, since the reduction in the real value of the allowance took place solely as a result of the failure to increase its nominal value in line with inflation. But, once the Government published its plans for the new Youth Training Scheme, its intention was clearly revealed. The original proposals, it will be remembered, included a substantial reduction in the nominal value of the allowance, accompanied by the withdrawal of the right to claim supplementary benefit from all 16 year olds. The Conservative Secretary of State for Employment, Norman Tebbit, made little effort to hide the fact that these proposals were part of the wider strategy to reduce youth wage levels. Indeed, he even went so far as to suggest that trainees being paid this lower level of allowance might be used in special factories set up to compete with the cheap labour of areas in the world such as South East Asia⁽³³⁾

Thus, although in the first place YOP's development as a positive adjunct of the Conservative Government's wider economic strategy may have been an unintended consequence, it did not remain so. As soon as it became clear how the programme was developing, the Government necessarily became to some extent responsible for allowing it to continue in this direction. But, more than this, evidence has now been produced to suggest that there was an element of deliberate intention involved. Previously, two objections were raised against such a suggestion. The first of these, that YOP was originally planned and launched by a Labour Government, has already been dealt with; the second, however, remains unanswered. It still has to be explained why, if the programme was deliberately being developed by the Conservative Government as a positive element of its wider economic strategy, it continued to enjoy the active support of the majority of the trade union movement.

8. Trade Union Involvement and the Survival of Corporatism

The discussion above has focused on the nature of the Conservative Government's responsibility for the way in which YOP developed. At this point, however, it should be recalled that any such responsibility was indirect, being mediated through the tripartite structures of the Manpower Services Commission. The TUC, of course, was one of the main corporate partners represented on both the Commission itself and the Special Programmes Board. In addition, there were trade union members on all of the local Area Boards, and specific trade union approval had to be sought for individual schemes in unionised workplaces. Thus, at all levels, the operation of the programme relied upon the active support of the trade union movement. Yet, this is not to imply that there was unanimous support and co-operation. From the outset, certain individual unions and workplaces refused to cooperate with the programme; and subsequently, as its development took shape under the Conservative Government, opposition became more widespread throughout the rank and file of the trade union movement. Nevertheless, despite grave reservations being expressed, at each year's Congress the TUC leadership was able to rally an overwhelming majority behind motions calling for the continued support of YOP. (35)

This continuation of trade union support for YOP despite the way in which it developed under the Conservative Government can be regarded as being of key significance to the explanation of the broader paradox of the MSC's survival and growth under a government explicitly hostile to a corporatist style of politics. We have already seen the extent to which the MSC's thriving development was dependent upon its involvement with YOP. Given how the programme contributed to the wider strategy of the Conservative Government, it is not difficult to find reasons why the Thatcher administration should have welcomed the way in which trade union support was drawn in through the tripartite structures of the MSC.

What is more difficult to explain is why the trade union movement continued to allow itself to be drawn in thus, when the programme that it was supporting was being used as a positive adjunct of a macro-economic strategy to which it was otherwise adamantly opposed. But, before attempting to answer this more difficult question, it is worth rehearsing the easier explanation for why the Conservative Government was quite content to continue working through corporatist structures in this particular area of policy.

In the first place, without the active support and cooperation of the vast majority of the trade union movement, it would have been impossible to develop a programme of YOP's scale and form. If the trade unions had refused to cooperate, the WEEP sector of the programme would have had to have been restricted to non-unionised workplaces. Admittedly, as it was, many of the WEEP sponsors were not unionised; but, if these alone had been available, it would have greatly reduced the overall range of opportunities and made it impossible to generate the numbers necessary to continue meeting the school leavers undertaking. This, in turn, would have seriously undermined the programme's value as a palliative.

There was also a more direct way in which the palliative effect of YOP was dependent upon the tripartite, quasi-governmental structures of the MSC, and in particular the trade union movement's involvement with them. YOP's function as a palliative, it will be remembered, was to ameliorate and disguise some of the most politically sensitive aspects of the mass unemployment resulting from the Government's macro-economic policy, thereby helping the Thatcher administration to resist the pressure to carry out a 'U-turn'. The principle way in which the programme did this was simply by taking large number of young people off the dole. However, the palliative effect of such action was greatly enhanced by the fact that it was not carried out directly as a government policy, but was undertaken through a body like the MSC which operated on the basis of a tripartite consensus. In particular, the inclusion of

the trade union movement within this consensus meant that the operation of the programme not only acted to ameliorate youth unemployment, but also helped to neutralise it as a political issue. Doing something about youth unemployment was no longer the sole responsibility of the Government, but was the shared responsibility of all the interests represented on the Commission, including the Government's opponents. If what was done was inadequate or unsatisfactory, the Government could always deflect the criticisms away from itself, by drawing attention to the active involvement of its opponents, and then letting them argue it out amongst themselves. (36) If, on the other hand, there was credit to be received for the programme's achievements, the Government could step forward and take the leading share for itself. In fact, it would seem that the tripartite and hived off aspects of the Commission made it the ideal instrument for the administration of a palliative such as YOP. (37) Furthermore, if the programme developed beyond being merely a palliative and came to be used by the Government as a positive adjunct of its wider economic policy, and yet still could be administered through the Commission with the active trade union support, so much the better as far as the Government was concerned.

Of course, there were costs as well as benefits for the Government in having YOP administered by the MSC. Obviously, the Secretary of State for Employment could not exercise quite the same degree of direct control over the programme as he might have done if it had been run by the Department of Employment itself. Furthermore, if there was a consensus amongst the organisations represented on the Commission, the Government could be pressurised into doing things that it would not have otherwise done, as was the case with the Youth Task Group Report. However, in the last analysis, the Commission was still totally dependent upon the Secretary of State for the approval of its plans and budget. If he was pressurised by there being a consensus on the Commission, given the need for it to include the representatives of the CBI, it was unlikely to involve a policy radically different from what the Government would

otherwise have pursued. Moreover, certain political capital could be gained from showing a willingness to compromise. Yet, conversely, if the Government was determined to go ahead with a policy for which there was no possibility of gaining a consensus, there was always the option of by-passing the Commission altogether. This is what happened with the Young Workers Scheme, which was administered directly by the Department of Employment, and subsequently with the military version of the Youth Training Scheme (38)

Thus, from the point of view of the Conservative Government, it would seem that the benefits of allowing the MSC to retain direct responsibility for YOP greatly outweighed the costs. In particular, it provided a means of binding the trade union movement to support the programme, while conceding to it only a limited degree of influence. But why, it now needs to be asked, did the trade union movement allow this state of affairs to continue, if it was so clearly advantageous to the Government? In almost every other area of policy, there was a relationship of outright antagonism between the trade unions and the Thatcher administration, yet here the unions were allowing themselves to be drawn into supporting a programme which contributed to the Government's wider economic strategy, not only as a palliative, but as a positive adjunct. (39)

One possible explanation might have been that there was a lack of awareness within the trade union movement of how the programme was really functioning and the extent to which it was benefitting the Government. However, this was not the case. The opposition to YOP which emerged amongst rank and file trade unionists made clear the arguments for regarding the programme as an integral element of the wider strategy of the Conservative Government. (40) Moreover, the trade union leaders who advocated continued support for the programme, while perhaps not accepting these arguments, were certainly aware of them and of the evidence on which they were based. Yet, there were other arguments which they considered to be of overriding importance.

First, in relation to the palliative effect of the programme, although this might be of benefit to the Government, it could not be forgotten that it derived from the real help given to thousands of young people for whom YOP was the only alternative to the dole. What is more, many of these young people were the sons and daughters of ordinary trade union members. If the unions removed their support from the programme, it was these young people who would suffer from the resulting shortage of places. This might reduce the effectiveness of the programme as a palliative for the Government, but then the unions could be made into the villain of the piece. All the shortcomings of the programme could be blamed upon the failure of the unions to cooperate, and they could be accused of putting their own vested interests before the welfare of unemployed young people. This consideration alone made it virtually a political impossibility for the trade union movement as a whole to withdraw its support.

A second argument made was to the effect that the programme would continue with or without trade union support, and given that this was so, it was better to keep being involved and retain some influence, than to withdraw and have none. As it was, the programme was subject to side-effects and abuses; what would it be like if the trade union movement no longer had any influence over its management and the schemes were largely confined to non-union premises? Not only would the palliative effect be reduced, but also the way would be left open for the Government to align the development of the programme even more directly with its wider economic strategy, and those young people who could still find a place on the programme would be abandoned to fend for themselves against the exploitation of unscrupulous employers. (41)

The premise underlying this argument was that the involvement of the trade union movement was having a significant impact upon both the development and performance of the programme. This, however, can be questioned. A key issue on which the influence of the trade

unions can be assessed is that of the abuses and side-effects to which the programme was subject. It was these that helped to ensure that the main economic effects of the programme were aligned with the wider economic strategy of the Conservative Government, and it was these that formed the basis of the case made for the withdrawal of trade union support by the programme's opponents. Conversely, those defending continued trade union involvement emphasised what it was achieving in terms of limiting the scope for abuses and side-effects within the programme. This would appear then to be an important test-case for the assessment of the influence derived by the trade union movement through its continued active involvement with YOP.

In March 1981, the General Council of the TUC considered the progress of YOP in the light of the growing criticism emerging within the trade union movement of a number of its aspects. Foremost amongst the targets for criticism was the use of YOP trainees as substitutes for permanent employees, and the outcome of the General Council's deliberations was a series of proposals which were designed to crack down on this abuse. These involved strengthening the MSC's application and monitoring procedures; giving unions a greater role in approving and monitoring schemes, including more stringent control of schemes in non-unionised workplaces; and the preparation of fresh guidance for unions on how to prevent any abuse. Subsequently, at the 1981 Congress, a motion was passed which declared that if such measures did not produce acceptable results, the trade union movement should oppose and withdraw its cooperation from the WEEP sector of YOP. (43)

The proposals put forward by the General Council depended upon action being taken both by the MSC and by the trade union movement itself. The MSC for its part responded by agreeing to strengthen its routine approval and monitoring procedures, while at the same time making it possible for the trade unions to play a greater role within them. (44) Thus, a requirement was made that all applications from employers in unionised workplaces should be countersigned by the relevant unions, while those from non-unionised

employers should at least be put before the Area Board. Furthermore arrangements were made whereby special vetting procedures could be introduced in areas such as agriculture, where there was particular concern about abuses taking place in the absence of strong union organisation. Meanwhile, the TUC sent out a circular to affiliated unions, advising them of these new procedures and urging them to take full advantage of the extended opportunities for trade union involvement.

This was all very fine in theory, but whether these measures could produce 'acceptable results' in terms of actually controlling abuse within the programme was another matter. This depended upon the commitment and capacity of both the MSC and the trade unions themselves to ensure the effective implementation of the new procedures. The evidence that has already been presented concerning the development and performance of the programme during its latter years would suggest that something substantial was lacking in some or all of these regards.

The MSC may have been committed to control the level of abuse within YOP, but it was not given the capacity to do so by the Government. The school leavers undertaking was always given first priority, and once this was met, there were not sufficient resources left to maintain the monitoring system. Ironically, it was in March 1981 the same date as the TUC General Council drew up its proposals for strengthening the approval and monitoring procedures - that the MSC recognised that the monitoring system had broken down, abandoned a large number of outstanding visits, and decided that it could no longer maintain a comprehensive approach to monitoring. Thereafter, despite adopting a more selective approach, and despite making further adjustments in the frequency of visits required for particular types of scheme, the MSC was still unable to catch up with its huge backlog of visits. Thus, at the same time as agreeing to the TUC's proposals for more stringent procedures to check abuses, the Commission was substantially weakening and failing to maintain its existing procedures -

presumably with the full knowledge of its TUC Commissioners. The TUC's proposals of course included new procedures for approvals as well as monitoring, but these to a large extent relied upon the trade unions themselves taking advantage of the new opportunities created for them to become more actively involved.

In the case of unionised workplaces, the requirement to obtain the signed approval of relevant unions at least ensured that they were consulted. Similarly, in the case of non-unionised workplaces, the trade union representatives on the Area Boards were at least ensured the opportunity to see and approve a full list of new scheme proposals. However, if these and the further opportunities which were made available for trade unions to contribute to the monitoring process were to be made full use of, it required a level of active interest in the operation of the programme at the grass roots of the trade union movement which does not appear to have been present. The greatest danger of abuses was of course with the schemes in non-unionised workplaces. Receiving a full list of such scheme proposals through the Area Board gave local trade unionists an opportunity to make their own enquiries and raise objections if necessary, But, if this was to be more than a formal rubber-stamping exercise, it could not be left solely to the representatives on the Area Board. In order to be an effective control, a large-scale coordinated effort was required on the part of the local trade union movement. Yet, this does not appear to have taken place, certainly not in the area of the local case study. Nor, for that matter, was there much evidence of trade union involvement in unionised workplaces going far beyond an initial agreement of approval. As for the establishment of special vetting procedures in areas of particular concern about abuses, this does not appear to have spread much beyond the agricultural sector in which it was originally piloted.

Whether or not the capacity existed within the trade union movement to ensure that there was an effective control of abuses at the ground level of the programme, there does not seem to have been the commitment necessary to make full use of such opportunities as were available to do so. It is interesting to note in this context the share of blame which trade union leaders were prepared to apportion to their fellow trade unionists for what retrospectively they were prepared to admit was the failure of YOP. Thus, Bill Keys, one of the three TUC representatives on the Commission, stated at the 1983 Congress, when trying to rally support for the new Youth Training Scheme:

"One of the reasons why the Youth Opportunities Programme failed was because the trade union movement failed the young. They did not go out and they did not monitor the YOP as they should have done". (45)

In a sense, it might be said that the trade unions experienced the worst of both worlds in their involvement with YOP. They gave their formal approval and they took their share of responsibility, yet they failed to make full use of the opportunity that this gave them to exercise control over the operation of the programme at the ground level. It would seem that, while the trade union leaders acting as representatives on the structures of the MSC pledged their full support for the programme, their members were somewhat half-hearted in their desire to get involved. Apparently, the problems and abuses to which the programme was subject, instead of encouraging them to become more actively involved, made them reluctant to have anything more to do with it than was absolutely necessary.

However responsibility should be distributed between the Government, the MSC and the trade unions themselves, one thing is clear: the results of the new procedures which were adopted in 1981 to strengthen the control of abuses within YOP could hardly be described as having been 'acceptable' from the angle of the trade unions. The TUC may have succeeded in having some influence upon

the formal rules of the programme, but it had failed to ensure that this was translated into an effective form of control at the level of individual schemes where the abuses that it was concerned about were taking place.

Other examples of the trades union movement's failure to translate its formal position of responsibility for YOP into a real influence over the management of the programme can easily be found. The holding down of the level of the trainees' allowance has been identified as being an important factor in the programme's contribution to the wider economic strategy of the Conservative Government. It also gave rise to widespread criticism throughout the trade union movement. In November 1981, when the level of the allowance stood at £23.50 per week, the TUC made a call for it to be increased to £30 in order to restore its original purchasing power.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The response of the Employment Secretary was to raise the allowance to £25 from January 1982, and then hold it at this level for the remaining one and a half years of the programme, thus in the long run bringing about a further reduction of its real value. The TUC protested at the original meagre increase and continued to protest when there was no further increase, but all to no avail. Similarly, the trade union movement's attempts to secure improvements in the quality of the programme do not seem to have met with notable success. In both cases, despite the tripartite decision-making structures of the MSC, it was the Government which had the ultimate say through its control over the programme's budget.

As well as attempting to use its position within the MSC to influence the way in which YOP operated, the trade union movement also sought to organise the trainees to stand up for their own interests on these issues. Some of the larger unions, such as the Transport and General Workers Union (T.G.W.U.) and the National Union of Public Employees (N.U.P.E.) ran campaigns to recruit

YOP trainees as union members; and, during the latter half of 1981, there was the 'Jobs for Youth' Campaign, of which the TUC was a leading sponsor. (47) But neither of these efforts could be described as a major success. Only a small minority of YOP trainees were ever recruited as union members and the impact of this appears to have been very marginal. On the evidence of the local case study, the recruiting campaigns were sporadic rather than concerted; and, of those trainees that were approached, few could be convinced that union membership would bring them sufficient tangible benefits to make it worth the payment of even a nominal subscription fee. As for the Jobs for Youth Campaign, this did initially succeed in generating a certain amount of publicity about the shortcomings of YOP. But, in the face of Government intransigence, the momentum could not be sustained. The climax of the first phase of the campaign was intended to be a mass rally to mark the arrival in London of the 'Jobs Express', a special train which had been on a nationwide tour collecting young people representing all parts of the country. However, on a cold November day, only 3,500 people attended the rally, and thereafter the campaign fizzled out. (48)

From the point of view of the TUC, the failure of this event lay not only in the poor attendance, but also in the attitude taken by many of those who did attend. The intention had been that the rally should add the weight of popular protest behind the efforts being made to reform and improve YOP from within the structures of the MSC. But, as the straggling column of demonstrators crossed over Westminster Bridge, the main chant that could be heard was this:

"Youth demand T-U-C
Withdraw support from Y-O-P".

Apparently, a considerable proportion of these young people who were sufficiently critical of the shortcomings of YOP to join in such a protest, extended this criticism to include the TUC's own

involvement with the programme.

Clearly, by this stage, the case for continued trade union involvement as a means of exerting influence over the development of the programme was losing credibility. Yet, for the reasons that have already been explained, withdrawal of support from YOP was still a political impossibility as far as the TUC leadership was concerned. The only way out of the impasse was to look beyond YOP itself, to the wider future of vocational training. The development of a comprehensive system of vocational preparation for all 16-18 year olds was a long standing objective of the TUC; and, from the outset, its support for YOP had taken into account the fact that the programme might prove to be an important stepping stone in this direction. (49) The publication of the New Training Initiative Consultative Document in May 1981 added substance to this hope, and thereby provided a new opportunity for YOP to be redeemed as far as the trade union movement was concerned. However, this depended upon the unions being able to exert a more effective influence over the development of YOP's successor than they had managed in the case of YOP itself.

An account has already been presented in a previous chapter of how the MSC and the Government simultaneously produced separate sets of plans for the implementation of the NTI, and of how the differences between these two versions with regard to the Youth Training Scheme were resolved when the Government endorsed the Youth Task Group Report in June 1982 (50) The significance of these events, in the context of the present discussion, was that on this occasion the TUC appeared to succeed in using its position within the MSC to bring about important changes in Government policy. It has already been noted earlier in this chapter how the Government's original plans for the Youth Training Scheme made obvious its intention to use the new scheme as a means of pushing down youth wage levels. It should be added that they also demonstrated a lack of any real commitment to the objective of

going beyond a special programme for the unemployed, to a comprehensive scheme of vocational training for all young people. On both of these issues, the TUC was adamant in its opposition to the Government. In relation to the first, it insisted that trainees should receive at least the same allowance as under YOP and that unions should have the power to negotiate additions to this basic allowance; furthermore, no young people should be compelled to join the new scheme through the withdrawal of their right to supplementary benefit. All of these points were unanimously agreed by the Youth Task Group. Similarly, a consensus was reached in line with the TUC's view that the new scheme should be a comprehensive training provision, available to both employed and unemployed young people. Faced by the united opposition of all the interests represented on the Youth Task Group, the Government was forced to relent on both of these issues.

The Government's endorsement of the Youth Task Group Report appeared to be a triumph for the TUC's policy of active involvement in the MSC's tripartite policy-making process, and certainly it was portrayed as such at the subsequent annual Congress. (51) Beyond the major issues that have already been highlighted, many other important points were established with regard both to scheme content and management, and to trade union involvement and consultation. These it was hoped would guarantee the quality of the new scheme, and ensure that it was not subject to the same problems and abuses that had caused the trade union movement so much concern in the case of YOP. But, it was not only from the angle of the TUC that the Youth Task Group Report could be regarded as a notable achievement. As we have seen, it could also be represented as being of major significance in terms of the wider principles of MSC policy. On the one hand, YOP's replacement by a comprehensive and high quality training scheme made it possible for this increasingly important area of Commission responsibility to be positively aligned with its wider approach to an active manpower policy. On the other hand, the establishment of a unanimous

agreement on these plans was of great significance in terms of the MSC's principle of consensus-based policy making, particularly given that the consensus on YOP had been at the point of collapse.

9. YTS as YOP's Redemption

The importance of the Youth Task Group Report was not only with regard to its definition of the future of the Youth Training Scheme; in a sense, it also redefined the history of YOP itself. If one was to judge YOP solely in terms of what it achieved during the five years of its existence, taking no account of what was to follow, one would have to conclude that in most respects it was a failure. It did, of course, succeed as a palliative and social measure, in so far as it guaranteed large numbers of young people a temporary alternative to the immediate prospect of the dole. But, beyond this, it failed in terms of both of the two main economic objectives originally defined and agreed upon in the Holland Report, these being the enhancement of young people's job prospects and the provision of a substantial element of training content. Furthermore, because of the abuses and side-effects to which it was subject, the programme arguably destroyed more permanent job opportunities for young people than it created. Only in terms which were specific to the Thatcher Government's monetarist economic strategy could the programme be interpreted as making a positive economic contribution. Yet, in so far as this was so, and particularly since there was evidence of it being intentional, it put in question the continued support of the trade union movement and therefore undermined the whole consensus-based approach to the MSC. In these circumstances, the Youth Task Group Report not only restored the consensus which was necessary for YOP to continue to the end of its five year life-span, but also held out the prospect of YOP's failure eventually being redeemed. YOP itself might not have been able to fulfil a positive economic function for which it could command consensus support, but at least it might be judged in the future as having paved the way towards a scheme which could do so, on the basis of its provision of a comprehensive programme of high quality training.

This, of course, all depended upon the Youth Training Scheme living up to the expectations of the Task Group Report. We have already

seen the extent to which the implementation of YOP diverged from its original plans, and also how difficult it proved for the various quality improvement initiatives to make any impression at the ground level of the programme. Furthermore, it has been noted how large a gap still remained between YOP during its final year and the standards which were expected of YTS. Thus, simply because the Youth Task Group Report held out the prospect of some form of retrospective redemption for YOP, it cannot be assumed that this necessarily took place. Hence, before reaching any final conclusions concerning the significance of YOP in a wider historical and political context, it will be necessary to take into account the progress of YTS so far, and whether it has been any more successful than YOP in fulfilling its original plans.

Footnotes

1. See above, Chapter 3, pp. 136-140.
2. See above, Chapter 1, p. 20.
3. See above, Chapter 3, p. 139.
4. Samuel Brittan, Second Thoughts on Full Employment Policy, The Centre for Policy Studies, 1975, p. 15.
5. See above, Chapter 1, pp. 24-25.
6. See Samuel Brittan, op.cit., pp. 82-87.
7. Ibid., pp. 103-104.
8. See William Keegan, Mrs Thatcher's Economic Experiment, Allen Lane, London, 1984, pp. 88-94.
9. See Antony Barker (ed.), Quangos in Britain: Government and the Networks of Public Policy-making, Macmillan, 1982, p. 225ff.
10. See Christopher Hood, 'The rise and rise of the British Quango,' New Society, 16th August 1973, pp. 386-388.
11. The debate about quangos can be followed in the Journal of Public Administration. See for example: Vol. 54, Summer 1976, p. 161ff., Winter 1976, p. 371ff.; Vol. 57, Spring 1979, p. 57ff., Autumn 1979, p. 309ff., Winter 1979, p. 379ff.
12. The link between the academic debate and the political campaign was made by the following publication: Philip Holland and Michael Fallon, The Quango Explosion, Conservative Political Centre, 1978.
13. See Antony Barker (ed.), op.cit., p. 228. The review was published in the form of a White Paper: Report on Non-Departmental Bodies, Cmd. 7797, HMSO, 1980 - also known as 'The Pliatsky Report'.
14. Total MSC expenditure in 1982-83 was £1,343.2 million compared with £641.3 million in 1978-79, a 109 per cent increase. Source: MSC, Annual Report, 1978-79 and 1982-83.
15. Total public expenditure in 1982-83 was £113,377 million compared with £65,752 million in 1978-79, a 72 per cent increase. Source: The Government's Expenditure Plans 1984-85 to 1986-87, Volume 1, Cmd. 9143-1, London, HMSO, 1984, p. 3, Table 1.2. Thus, during this five year period MSC expenditure increased at a 51 per cent faster rate than total public expenditure.
16. See Employment Gazette, August 1981, p. 339.
17. See The Listener, 12th April 1984.

18. This criticism was commonly expressed by those in the labour movement who were opposed to trade union involvement with the programme.
19. Given the effects of substitution and displacement, it is arguable that the impact on the total of unemployment was less than the total numbers within the programme.
20. See The Sunday Times, 6th November 1983.
21. The account which follows is based largely on William Keegan, op.cit., Chapter 4.
22. Obviously, it is impossible to isolate the impact of YOP on the level of youth wages from the general effect of the disproportionately high level of youth unemployment. However, there was a clear trend for youth wages to fall as a proportion of adult wages during the period of the programme and it has been demonstrated how it might have been expected that YOP would contribute to the translation of high levels of youth unemployment into lower levels of wages. Between 1979 and 1984, the real value of the average wage of 16 and 17 year olds fell by 3.8% in the case of males and 1.9% in the case of females. Over the same period, the ratio of 16 and 17 year olds' wages to those of adults' over 21 declined from 56.0% to 48.3%, and the 18-20/21+ wage ratio declined from 74.6% to 67.9%. (See Youthaid, Youthaid Bulletin, December 1984 - the source of the average wage figures is the New Earnings Survey). In considering the significance of these average youth wage figures, it needs to be taken into account that the decline in their real and relative values took place despite the increasing proportion of the least qualified young people in the 16 and 17 age group who were being taken into YOP.
23. The local case study revealed that for many young people YOP was only the first stage in a series of low paid temporary jobs which allowed employers to try them out before accepting or rejecting them as full-time adult workers. See below, Appendix, p.498.
24. Examples of this policy were the introduction of the following measures: the Enterprise Allowance Scheme; the Small Business Loan Guarantee Scheme; the 30 per cent reduction in Corporation Tax for Small Businesses; the Small Firms Service; and the Business Expansion Scheme.
25. See William Keegan, op.cit., p. 113ff.
26. This was clear from the papers presented to the Special Programmes Board.
27. The budget for YOP in 1979/80 was cut from £168m to £142m. The impact of this was detailed by a Special Programmes Board Paper (SPB/79/24).
28. This was stated to be the case by John Golding, the junior minister who was directly responsible for the MSC at the time.

29. The source for the Average Earnings Index is the Employment Gazette.
30. See MSC, Young People and Jobs, op.cit., p. 36, para. 3.34.
31. See New Society, 2nd June 1983, p. 343.
32. See Time Out, 20th-26th May 1983, pp. 5-7.
33. See Trades Union Congress, Annual Report and Congress Proceedings 1983, TUC, London, p. 428.
34. Most embarrassing for the programme was the refusal of one of the major civil servants unions, the CPSA, to allow schemes to be set up by government departments and agencies. See MSC, Review of the First Year of Special Programmes, op.cit., p. 39, para. 4.6
35. See Trade Union Congress, op.cit., 1980-1983.
36. Thus, for example, when asked about the danger of YTS substituting for jobs that would otherwise be done by adults, Norman Tebbit was able to dismiss the question as follows: "If that were true, do you think that the TUC Commissioners in the Manpower Services Commission would have welcomed the scheme." Norman Tebbit speaking on 'The World at One', BBC Radio 4, 19th May 1983.
37. This is another point on which it is possible to make comparisons with the situation during the interwar years. Thus, during the 1930s when laissez-faire macro-economic policies were failing to make any impression on mass unemployment, attempts were made to use administrative means for the purpose of depoliticising the whole unemployment issue. Corporate bodies such as the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee and the Unemployment Assistance Board, which had semi-independent status in relationship to central government, were established to administer the measures of unemployment relief. The object was to make unemployment a national issue outside politics and distanced from the economic policy of the Government. This was not altogether successful, but it might help to explain why a 'hived-off' body such as the MSC has been chosen as the main channel for the administration of modern special measures. See Alan E. Booth, 'An administrative Experiment in Unemployment Policy in the Thirties', Public Administration, Summer 1978, pp. 139-157.
38. The Armed Services Youth Training Scheme was announced in the House of Commons by Michael Heseltine on 14 April 1983. It was made plain that it was a separate scheme from YTS proper, but its budget was deducted from that of the scheme as a whole. Over 5,000 places were offered, but less than half were filled during its first year.
39. For example, there were the battles over the succession of Employment Acts introduced by the Government with the object of curbing trade union powers. Also, the National Economic Development Council, which was designed as a tripartite forum concerned with macro-economic policies, ceased to play a useful role.

40. See, for example, The Morning Star, 4th January 1982 and 11th February 1983, and also speeches made in the annual debates on the subject at the Trades Union Congress, such as op.cit., 1983, pp. 427-429.
41. See Trades Union Congress, op.cit., 1983, pp. 403-405 and 430-431.
42. See ibid., 1981, pp. 46-47.
43. See ibid., p. 439ff.
44. See ibid., 1982, pp. 39-40.
45. Ibid., 1983, p. 435.
46. See ibid., 1982, p. 40.
47. The other main sponsors of the 'Jobs for Youth' Campaign were the Afro-Caribbean Organisation, the British Youth Council, the National Association of Asian Youth, the National Union of Students and Youthaid.
48. See The Guardian, 30th November 1981.
49. This point was emphasised to me during the course of an interview with a senior staff member of the TUC Organisation and Industrial Relations Department.
50. See above, Chapter 5, pp. 276-279.
51. See Trades Union Congress, op.cit., 1982, pp. 477-479 and 537-541.

CHAPTER 8

THE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME IN ITS WIDER HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1. The First Year of YTS

This final chapter was embarked upon in September 1984, when the Youth Training Scheme had just completed its first full year. Obviously, there were limits to what could be said about its achievements at this early stage of development. Nevertheless, certain important features had already begun to emerge which needed to be taken into consideration before reaching any final conclusions on the wider historical significance of YOP. The account which follows is not intended to provide a comprehensive analysis of the progress of the YTS in relation to its original plans. Rather, its purpose is to pick out certain key features which can be related back to the analysis that has been presented of YOP.

First, it will be remembered that there were two main issues on which originally there was a divergence of opinion between the Government and the MSC: the inclusion of employed as well as unemployed young people on the new scheme, and the maintenance of the level of the allowance without any form of compulsion through the withdrawal of supplementary benefit. On both of these, the unanimity of the Youth Task Group Report eventually forced the Government to relent. Yet, only one year into the new scheme, there was evidence in both cases of the Government reverting to its original plans.

The objective of providing a planned foundation year for all minimum age school leavers, whether employed or unemployed, lay at the heart of the concept of YTS which was agreed upon by the Youth Task Group. (1) The original plan was that the new scheme should take in some 460,000 entrants during its first year, this total including not only unemployed 16 and 17 year old school leavers but also most 16 year olds in employment. (2)

Great efforts were made to prepare this number of places, but soon it became apparent that many would not be needed. By the end of the first financial year, there had only been some 354,000 entrants recorded, and this included a certain amount of double counting of young people who had entered twice. The main reason for this substantial shortfall was the almost complete failure of the scheme to bring in youngsters who had started paid employment. (3) Thus, in its first year, YTS remained basically a special provision for the unemployed, the same as YOP had been before, and in accordance with the Government's original plan rather than the concept agreed upon by the Youth Task Group Report.

The fact that this happened cannot necessarily be blamed upon the Government. Sufficient resources were made available for the MSC to generate the number of places required to cater for both employed and unemployed young people. The problem appears to have been that almost all of the effort was put into locating these places, rather than attracting the young people who were needed to fill them. Meanwhile, more school leavers than had been anticipated succeeded in finding permanent jobs outside the scheme. (4) Although the Government could not be held directly responsible for this, there was evidence to suggest that it was not completely committed to the concept of YTS as a comprehensive scheme. The Youth Task Group Report had stated that the Young Workers Scheme was inconsistent with the objective of providing a year's foundation training for all minimum age school leavers, and had therefore proposed that it should not be continued once YTS had started. As it was, during the first year of the new scheme, the Government chose to ignore this proposal, and a considerable number of those 16 year olds who found employment outside YTS were accounted for by the Young Workers Scheme. Subsequently, the Government compromised and withdrew the eligibility of 16 year olds to be employed under the terms of the Young Workers Scheme. Nevertheless, doubts still remained about its commitment to develop YTS into a universal scheme. In January 1984, the Training For Jobs White Paper provided an up-date on the progress that had been made towards the three

objectives of the New Training Initiative, but failed to give any explicit reaffirmation of the commitment to extend YTS to include all minimum age school leavers. This gave rise to speculation that the Government might be intending to continue YTS as a scheme primarily for the unemployed,⁽⁵⁾ and at the time of writing this speculation remained unanswered.⁽⁶⁾

With reference to the trainees' allowance and the eligibility of young people to claim supplementary benefit, the Government had kept its options open from the beginning. Whilst agreeing to the Youth Task Group Report recommendation that the allowance should not be any lower than the level of £25 paid under YOP, it had avoided committing itself to maintain the real value of this against inflation. Similarly, it had reserved the right to review at a later date the question of supplementary benefit entitlement of those who refused a place on YTS. In both cases, the Government was to make use of these loopholes.

The unanimous agreement of the Youth Task Group had been that the real value of the trainees' allowance should be maintained against inflation. Already, by the time that YTS was being launched, the allowance had lost some of its value, in comparison with when this had originally been agreed. Consequently, in June 1983, the MSC recommended that the amount should be raised from £25 to £26.45. This was rejected out of hand by the Conservative Employment Secretary, Norman Tebbit, who argued that such an increase could not be afforded without cutting either the size or quality of the scheme. He was supported in this action by the CBI, whose representatives on the Commission had voted against the majority recommendation, thus reneging on the unanimous agreement of the Youth Task Group Report.⁽⁷⁾ A year later, the issue surfaced again, only this time it was the TUC which found itself in a minority on the Commission in recommending that the real value of the allowance should be restored as originally agreed. The majority recommendation was for an increase of £1.25, which the

Government agreed to implement from September 1st 1984. (8)
 This might just about have compensated for inflation since the beginning of the scheme's full operation, which was a year previously. But, for the allowance to have retained its value as originally agreed by the Youth Task Group, it would have had to have risen to a level of about £30; and, to be comparable with the original YOP allowance, it would have needed to be approaching £40. (9) Nor could the Government use lack of resources as an excuse this time, the scheme having been considerably underspent at the end of its first year because of the shortfall in recruitment. (10)

The level set for the allowance was of course only intended to be a minimum, the TUC having established in the Youth Task Group Report the right for unions to negotiate an additional 'top-up' for individual schemes. Yet, by the end of the first year of YTS, it was evident that in the vast majority of cases the minimum level had been taken as the norm. (11) There were exceptions and in some cases the top-up was quite substantial. (12) But unions such as NALGO, which attempted to enforce the raising of the level of the allowance to the 'going rate for the job', soon found that this was impractical as a general policy. (13)

An issue closely related to the right of unions to negotiate top-ups to the trainees' allowances was that of apprentice pay. The Youth Task Group Report had established that, where there were existing collective agreements, negotiations should take place. (14) Furthermore, the TUC had made clear that it did not expect the inclusion of first year apprentices within YTS to be used as an excuse for disregarding existing agreements and reducing their pay levels. Nevertheless, during the first year of YTS there were numerous examples of precisely this taking place. (15)

As far as young people's right to supplementary benefit was concerned, despite certain threats and scares, this was at least

formally retained. Nevertheless, the Government managed to introduce an element of financial compulsion into the scheme which many considered to be 'a breach of the spirit, if not the letter, of the Youth Task Group Report'. (16) This was achieved through an instruction issued by Employment Secretary, Norman Tebbit, to the effect that young people refusing to accept a place on YTS should be subject to the same financial penalty as those who refused a reasonable offer of a job. This meant that for a period of six weeks their benefit might be reduced by 40 percent, bringing it down to a level of only £9.50. Moreover, the effect of this sanction was strengthened by means of the pressure which the Department of Employment put on careers officers to report refusers, when previously this had been left to their discretion. (17)

It should now be apparent that, with regard to both of the main issues on which there had been disagreement between the Government and the MSC, the first year of YTS turned out to resemble the original plans of the Government more closely than those which had subsequently been agreed on the basis of the Youth Task Group Report. Thus, from the start, the scheme had catered almost exclusively for unemployed young people, and still at the end of its first year, doubt remained as to the commitment of the Government to ensure that it would develop into a comprehensive scheme. Meanwhile, a further depreciation of the real value of the allowance had been allowed to take place, and an element of financial compulsion had been introduced by means of the threat of partial loss of benefits. In none of these instances had the Government actually broken any formal undertaking that it had given, but certainly it had condoned, encouraged and instigated developments of the scheme that were incompatible with the ethos of the Youth Task Group.

The other main feature in relation to which the first year's performance of YTS needs to be assessed is that of quality of training content. It was this, alongside the scheme's comprehensiveness, that was intended to distinguish YTS from YOP, and to

provide it with a positive economic function within the wider framework of the MSC's active manpower policy. Furthermore, it was this which was supposed to provide the justification for the low level of the trainees' allowance.

The easiest way to summarise the first year of YTS with regard to the scheme's quality of content is merely to state that the dominant theme of the previous five years of YOP was repeated. Thus, quality was sacrificed in the pursuit of quantity. In the rush to generate the places that it was anticipated would be required for some 460,000 entrants, the MSC made a number of significant compromises in the strict quality specifications that had originally emanated from the Youth Task Group Report. Initially, the required content of schemes had been clearly laid down in terms of the eight following design elements: induction; assessment; planned work experience (up to a maximum of 39 weeks); a minimum of 13 weeks relevant off-the-job training; guidance and support; training based on one or more broad areas of related occupations; training in basic skills of general use in employment; and a record of achievement. As it happened, when it came to the implementation of the scheme, the MSC showed itself willing to waive certain aspects of the design elements, treating them as recommended rather than mandatory. In particular, as a result of employers' objections, the idea of a detailed assessment and record of achievement was dropped in favour of a simple statement of the standards met. Similarly, in the face of employer resistance, the MSC did not always insist upon the requirement that the training content of schemes should cover a broad occupational area. (18)

Beyond these compromises in the original scheme specifications, there still remained the problem of ensuring that the agreed training content was actually delivered. The Youth Task Group Report had intended that the training plans drawn up on the basis of the eight design elements should be embodied in legally enforceable contracts. However, this idea came to nothing. (19)

The Report also suggested that in view of the MSC's unimpressive record on the monitoring of YOP, outsiders with practical experience of education and industry should be recruited to assist with quality assurance.⁽²⁰⁾ It was stressed as a priority that these quality assurance staff should be engaged, briefed and trained in good time.⁽²¹⁾ Yet, when the new scheme was launched no such staff had been recruited, and generally there was a lack of clarity about the monitoring arrangements that were to be adopted. It was stated that some of the monitoring could be carried out by telephone, and that the frequency of actual visits would depend upon the reputation of the sponsors. An assurance was given by the Chairman of the MSC, David Young, that there would be enough inspectors to ensure the quality of the scheme, but he refused to give any indication of how frequent the visits would be.⁽²²⁾ Meanwhile, employers were being assured that there would only be a low level of inspections.⁽²³⁾ MSC officials were said to set great store on the internal monitoring being carried out by the 'managing agencies' in the employer-based 'Mode A' of the scheme, which was the equivalent of the WEEP sector of YOP and accounted for some 80 per cent of the total number of places.⁽²⁴⁾ Managing agencies were either larger firms or specially created companies which were paid by the MSC to take responsibility for coordinating training programmes on behalf of groupings of smaller work experience sponsors. The MSC only undertook to monitor directly these coordinating organisations, and apart from a small sample of visits, left it up to them to control the activities of the individual sponsors. This meant having to visit some 5,700 managing agencies, as opposed to perhaps as many as 150,000 individual workplaces. Nevertheless, according to the pressure group Youthaid, only about half of the managing agencies had received visits by January 1984, nine months after the scheme had first been launched.⁽²⁵⁾ Moreover, it was not until this date that plans were announced for the training of specialist programme assessors who were to

operate a new system of regular quarterly monitoring visits. This was not to be introduced until the following autumn, and it might also be noted that the 1,500 assessors being trained were junior MSC area office staff and not experienced practitioners drawn from outside. (26)

The MSC claimed that early results indicated that some two-thirds of all programmes met the scheme's current design and content requirements. (27) However, given the lack of regularity of monitoring during the first year and the lack of experience of those responsible for carrying it out, doubt must remain as to how closely provision on the ground conformed to the nationally proclaimed standards. Even if the formal requirements were met, we have seen from the local case study of YOP that this should not necessarily be regarded as any guarantee of quality. A report made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate provided evidence that this was equally the case during the first year of YTS, at least as far as the contribution of the education service was concerned. Thus, although the requirement of a minimum of 13 weeks off-the-job-training was upheld, the report revealed that the training being provided was often insufficiently related to the other 39 weeks of work experience. Also noted was the general failure of MSC guidelines to shape the content of courses, and in particular, to promote the adoption of a broad-based occupational approach. Yet, it was precisely on those courses which followed most closely the traditional narrowly craft-based approach of an apprenticeship that some of the best motivated and successful trainees were to be found; whereas, many trainees were reluctant to accept the broader occupational family approach recommended by the MSC. As for trainee log books, which were intended to be the principle means of recording progress, the report indicated that their actual use was only patchy. Finally, it also pointed out some of the underlying restrictions on the quality of provision such as the low status given to YTS work in colleges, the shortage of suitable accommodation and equipment, and the lack of staff

development. In relation to the last of these factors, it should be noted that more than fifty special 'accredited centres' had been set up throughout the country to provide training for YTS staff. Yet, many came into operation behind schedule, and according to the HMI's report, in-service training for college teachers involved with YTS was still lagging well behind. (28)

Thus, during the first year of YTS, not only were the original standards of quality compromised, but also the remaining requirements were inadequately monitored and there was evidence of a considerable gulf between nationally proclaimed objectives and the reality of the scheme at the ground level. In each of these respects the experience of YOP was repeated, and when criticism of this emerged, the initial response was also the same. The shortcomings were explained in terms of the problems associated with the speed and scale of the scheme's launch, and it was promised that there would be a major improvement in subsequent years. A key factor in this promised improvement was to be the new monitoring system which has already been mentioned. Yet, even before it had been implemented, serious doubts were emerging as to the likelihood of its efficacy. These concerned not only the capacity of the fifteen hundred junior MSC staff that had been trained to form the new inspectorate, but also the way in which the qualitative objectives of the scheme had thus far been defined. (29)

The eight design elements have already been listed and it has been described how aspects of them were compromised. In addition to these, there were six broad types of learning opportunity which it was specified should be offered to each trainee. (30) The problem which emerged during the first year of the scheme was that the complexity of this combined structure caused confusion amongst those working in the field, and this was compounded by the uncertainty as to exactly which aspects of the design elements were mandatory. This confusion has made it impossible as yet to develop a simple means of assessing quality in terms of a clearly defined

and agreed set of outcomes.⁽³¹⁾ The need for simplification has been recognised, and development work has been initiated under the aegis of the Advisory Group on Contents and Standards - a committee of specialists set up to advise the Youth Training Board on such technical matters.⁽³²⁾ Thus, in May 1984, a new skills list was unveiled which it was indicated could be developed not only as the basis of an effective system of certification, but also as the key instrument of quality control. The list consists of 103 generic skills which it is claimed underlie the performance of almost all tasks at work and in many other practical activities. Standard methods of assessing performance in these skills are to be developed and used both for the purposes of certification, and as a means of quality control based on results.⁽³³⁾ The problem is, however, that YTS is already over a year old and this work is still in the initial stages of development. Moreover, the approach that it embodies is by no means universally agreed upon. For example, it is not necessarily consistent with the Occupational Training Families approach initially favoured by the MSC, some of whose proponents have previously denied the very existence of generic skills. Given this lack of a fully-worked out and agreed upon alternative, it is hardly surprising that practitioners in the field, not to mention trainees, often prefer to stick to the tried and tested formulae of narrowly craft-based training.⁽³⁴⁾ As for the new programme assessors, so long as this state of confusion and flux remain, theirs would seem to be an impossible task, however well-trained and experienced they might be.

Thus, on three key points agreed by the Youth Task Group Report, the Youth Training Scheme has so far failed to deliver what was promised. First, it has failed to develop as a comprehensive form of provision for both employed and unemployed. Secondly, it has failed to maintain the real value of the trainee's allowance and to avoid the introduction of any element of financial compulsion. Thirdly, it has failed to guarantee a high quality of training content: indeed, quality has yet to be defined in a way that can be effectively measured. The only other issue which needs to be

mentioned is that of employability. It will be remembered that the employment placement rate of trainees was one of the key criteria by which the performance of YOP was assessed. In the case of YTS, the fact that it was intended to be a training provision for both employed and unemployed young people meant that less emphasis was put upon this factor. Nevertheless, claims were made that the scheme would substantially enhance the employment prospects of those who were unemployed. (35) As yet, there is not sufficient evidence available to make any judgement on this point. However, given the failure of YTS to make any substantial improvement upon YOP in other respects, it may prove to be crucial to the future credibility of the scheme. (36)

On the evidence available so far concerning the development of YTS, the prospect of some form of retrospective redemption for YOP which was held out by the Youth Task Group Report would appear to be as far away as ever. YTS has repeated rather than redeemed the shortcomings of YOP, and there does not seem to be much immediate prospect of it doing otherwise. The implications of this can be examined from a number of different angles. Let us start with the MSC itself and its characteristic approach to manpower policy.

2. The Demise of the MSC's Original Interpretation of an Active Manpower Policy

Briefly recapping, it will be remembered that the MSC was originally established to oversee the administration of an active manpower policy. The main features of this, as originally defined in Towards A Comprehensive Manpower Policy, were that it should serve an economic as well as a social function, and that it should involve only limited direct intervention in the labour market. Additionally, the style of policy-making of the Commission was to be one based on consensus. The original interpretation of the dual function of an active manpower policy consisted primarily of the provision of employment and training services, and these activities initially accounted for the vast majority of the Commission's comparatively modest expenditure. Yet, from the very outset, unemployment was emerging as a major problem, and increasingly the MSC was drawn into the provision of special measures for its relief. Initially, these activities were only on a small scale by comparison with the employment and training services, and also some attempt was made to integrate them within the terms of an active manpower policy. However, by mid-way through YOP's five year life-span, special programmes were accounting for almost a third of the MSC's considerably enlarged budget, and yet YOP itself was failing to make any significant contribution to the Commission's wider interpretation of manpower policy. As we have seen, it was unable to fulfil satisfactorily a positive economic function, either in terms of its employment placement rate, or in terms of the quality of its training content. Hence, it was basically just a huge social programme which, because of its size and the lack of adequate monitoring, was inevitably causing substantial interference with the normal workings of the youth labour market. In this context, the significance of the New Training Initiative and the Youth Task Group Report was that they set out, and created a consensus around, a path of development by which the simple relief of youth unemployment being provided by YOP could be positively transformed into an integral

element of the training aspect of the Commission's interpretation of an active manpower policy. The crucial steps to be taken along this path were that the Youth Training Scheme should be a comprehensive form of provision for both employed and unemployed young people, and that it should offer a high quality of training content. As yet, neither of these steps has been taken, and YTS in practice remains primarily a huge social programme for the relief of youth unemployment, just as YOP was before. The implications of this for the MSC's pursuit of a comprehensive manpower policy are extremely serious.

Some impression of the significance assumed by YTS in the context of MSC policy as a whole can be gained from examining the distribution of the Commission's expenditure during the first financial year of the new scheme. (37) The fact that YTS has failed to improve much upon YOP in terms of either quality or comprehensiveness has not stopped it from being appreciably more expensive, if only because of the increase in its standard length of provision. (38) Thus, in 1983-84 £777 million was spent on YTS, compared with £543 million in the previous year on YOP. What is more, this represented an increased share of total MSC expenditure. Back in 1980/81 YOP accounted for 25 per cent of the Commission's spending; preparing for the transition to YTS in the two following years, this figure rose to just over 40 percent; finally, in its first financial year, the share of the new scheme reached 44 per cent, and this despite a substantial underspend. Thus, YTS's failure to make the transition to a comprehensive, high quality training scheme has meant that approaching half of the MSC's total budget is being spent on what was still basically a special programme without any real economic function.

The situation becomes even worse if one analyses the distribution of the MSC's other expenditure during 1983-4. To start with, it should be noted that the spending on YTS represented 72 per cent

of the total devoted to all forms of training activity. If one excluded YTS, only 15 per cent of all MSC expenditure would be accounted for by the remaining conventional training services. (39) As for the employment services, the expenditure of the ESD still represented 36 per cent of the MSC total. However, the majority of this consisted of special programmes for the adult unemployed, notably the Community Programme. Conventional employment services on their own accounted for only 13 per cent of the MSC total. Furthermore, if the expenditure on the adult special programmes, together with that on Community Industry, were to be added to the figure for YTS, the resulting total would represent 70 per cent of all MSC expenditure. Thus, if it is accepted that in its first year YTS operated effectively as a continuation of YOP, it must be concluded that 70 per cent of the total MSC expenditure in 1983/84 was devoted to special programmes of various kinds. Meanwhile, the conventional employment and training services, on which the implementation of the Commission's original interpretation of an active manpower policy was dependent, accounted for less than 30 per cent between the two of them.

Expenditure statistics alone cannot give the complete picture. In order to comprehend the full extent of the demise of the conventional employment and training services, it is necessary to summarise briefly what has happened to each of them during the period of YOP's development and the transition to YTS. Starting with the employment services, it will be remembered that the MSC took over the modernisation programme which had first been outlined in 1971 by the document People and Jobs. The programme involved the expansion and development of the job placement service, on the basis of a new network of self-service Jobcentres which were to be located in prominent High Street sites away from the old benefit offices.

Initially, the implementation of this programme was one of the MSC's main priorities, the efficient matching-up of job seekers and vacancies being regarded as an important aspect of an active

manpower policy. However, the imposition of cuts from 1979 onwards, combined with the emergence of the new priority of special programmes for the unemployed, led to a slowing down of the completion of the final stages of the modernisation programme and a reduction in some existing services. Furthermore, the growth of unemployment itself led to the questioning of the whole rationale of the public employment service and its modernisation. With over two million people unemployed, there were likely to be only very selective problems of skill shortage and mismatch, and hence it could be argued that it was no longer worthwhile maintaining the complete network of Jobcentres, let alone improving it. In short, mass unemployment undermined the economic rationale of the employment services.

The stimulus for a reversal of policy was provided when the operations of the employment services were subjected to investigation by the so-called 'Rayner scrutiny process'. (40) A scrutiny concerned generally with the administration of benefits for the unemployed recommended that registration at Jobcentres should no longer be compulsory for the claiming of such benefits. (41) Once this recommendation was implemented in October 1982, the way was open for further cuts to be made. A second Rayner scrutiny produced a report specifically on the employment services which, in effect, recommended the complete reversal of their previous trend of development. The need to have Jobcentres located on expensive High Street sites was questioned and it was proposed that cuts should be made on the existing network, together with reductions in the numbers of staff. (42) As a result, by 1984, the total number of staff in the Employment Services Division had been brought down to little more than 11,000, compared with more than 15,000 in 1979 when there was no responsibility for adult special programmes in addition to the conventional employment services. (43) Yet, the Government was still demanding more staff cuts and more reductions in a budget which had already been steadily falling in real value over previous years. (44)

The response of the MSC has been to plan for a radical reorganisation of the whole Jobcentre network. This seems likely to involve the replacement of many Jobcentres by a combination of 'Jobshops' offering only limited services and 'Jobpoints' which will act merely as publicity stalls. (45) Critics see this as another step in the dismantling of the public employment service, while its proponents within the MSC recommend it as the only way of preserving the principle of a public employment service in the face of Government pressure for public expenditure cuts and privatisation. Whichever may be the case, it is clear that the days of an expanding public employment service playing a positive role within an active manpower policy are over: if the service does survive, it will be on the cheapest and most minimal basis possible.

Turning now to the training services, the story is fundamentally the same, though somewhat more complex. When the MSC first took over the Training Services Agency in 1974, it inherited two principle responsibilities in relation to the national training system. One was to oversee and coordinate the provision of training within industry, on the basis of the structure of sectoral Industrial Training Boards which had been established by the 1964 Industrial Training Act. The other was to manage its own direct provision of training. It will be remembered that the MSC's original policies in relation to both of these areas of responsibility had already been pre-defined by the 1972 document, Training for the Future. These involved the partial phasing out of the levy system operated by the ITBs and the expansion of the direct provision of training through the development of the Training Opportunities Scheme. The overall objective was to ensure that there was an adequate supply of skilled manpower to meet the needs of every sector of the economy.

The development of the TOPS programme followed a parallel course to that of the Jobcentre programme within the employment services. The objective of the scheme was to provide adults with skills training

for which there was an active demand within the labour market, and the target set was eventually 100,000 completions per year.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Initially, this programme of expansion was given high priority and took place at a rapid pace. The peak number of completions reached was 75,000 in 1979/80, but already cuts had started to be imposed and this was 4,500 below target.⁽⁴⁷⁾ The cuts continued in subsequent years, and in 1982/83 a low point was reached of less than 60,000 completions.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Beyond the general need for public expenditure restraint, a strong rationale for these cuts was provided by the rapidly declining employment placement rates of many of the courses in the face of rising unemployment. This also led to substantial changes being made in the distribution of provision between different skill areas.⁽⁴⁹⁾ In 1983/84, there was a slight recovery, with the total number of completions rising back up to 66,000. However, much of this was due to the extension of special work preparation courses for the adult unemployed rather than the restoration of proper skill training courses.⁽⁵⁰⁾ It is noticeable that the financial cuts continued nevertheless. In fact, virtually the same number of completions was achieved as in 1980/81 at a 4 per cent lower cash price, which takes no account of inflation over the intervening years.⁽⁵¹⁾ This might of course indicate the elimination of certain sources of waste; but given also the change in the balance of the different types of courses, it would seem to suggest that, despite the superficial maintenance of numbers, there was a continuing decline in the form of recognised occupational skills training which the scheme was originally intended to provide.

The demise of the Skillcentre network provides another indication of what has really been happening as far as the MSC's direct provision of training services has been concerned. The network was built up through the seventies in line with the expansion of training provision such as TOPS. Subsequently, there have been two distinct stages in its demise. First, there was its subjugation to narrow commercial principles. This took place when in April 1983 the Skillcentre Training Agency was established as a separate,

commercially orientated organisation within the Commission. Initially, it was to receive a certain amount of financial support, but from 1986/87 onwards it was planned that it should be run independently on a break-even basis. (52) The second stage, which followed almost inevitably, was the planning of a severe cut-back in the size of the network. At the time of writing, it appears likely that up to 29 out of the total 87 Skillcentres will be closed down in an attempt to meet the break-even target. (53) Given that the new Agency is directly dependent upon the MSC and in particular TOPS for the vast majority of its business, and given that it is having to compete with colleges which are often highly subsidised, this outcome was predictable. Equally predictable was that the cuts in the network should be directed mainly towards areas of high unemployment where trainees have the least chance of finding jobs. These are the inevitable results of making the network run on the narrow economic criterion of commercial viability.

The introduction of exemptions into the levy/grant system operated by the ITBs, which was authorised by the 1973 Employment and Training Act, curtailed to a certain extent their influence over employers. However, subsequently, the MSC took over responsibility for the Boards' operating costs, and also made available training grants for them to pass on to employers. The first major initiative made by the MSC in this area was the 'Training for Skills Programme' (T.S.P.A.), which was endorsed by the Labour Government in 1977. (54) This was designed to develop and coordinate the efforts of the ITBs and other training organisations in relation to the identification and remedying of skill shortages. However, from the beginning, the effectiveness of the programme was limited by the refusal of the employers to agree to a collective funding mechanism. (55) Consequently, when a review of the 1973 Employment and Training Act was made by the MSC in 1980, it was recommended that the ITBs should be given more power and authority to deal with their respective industries. (56) The new Conservative Government's response was to do the opposite, ordering the abolition of the ITBs in all

but a few key sectors, and transferring the operating costs of those remaining back from the MSC to the employers. The powers necessary to do this were legislated for by a new Employment and Training Act (1981). The result was that only seven out of twenty-three ITBs survived, and elsewhere there was a return to the kind of voluntary arrangements which had already proved inadequate prior to 1964.

The other important event of 1981 was the launching of the New Training Initiative. This, it will be remembered, included two major objectives other than that concerned with YTS and the broader vocational preparation of young people. The first of these was for the development of skill training and the reform of the apprenticeship system. The second was for the widening of training opportunities for adults. The progress made in relation to each of them was reported three years later in the Training For Jobs White Paper.

In relation to the first of these objectives, it was stated that substantial progress had been made in some industries towards the reforming of their training arrangements, basing them on the achievement of agreed standards rather than time-serving. (57) However, the significance of this progress was seriously undermined by the continuing decline in the overall volume of skills training taking place within industry. The MSC's NTI Agenda for Action had suggested as a target that by 1986 at least 120,000 young people should be recruited annually into occupations calling for an extended period of training, including apprenticeships. This was said to represent approximately a 20 per cent increase on the intake into apprenticeship of 1981/2. (58) What actually happened, as admitted by the Training For Jobs White Paper, was that by 1983/84 the volume of apprentice recruitment fell to below 40,000. (59) This was despite some continued assistance from the Government in the form of special financial grants. In the future, the only Government support is to be for the first year of foundation training within the framework of YTS. The White Paper makes it clear that beyond this the responsibility will rest with

the employers and the individual trainees themselves. In effect, the future of occupational skills training is being left to the operation of market forces and their immediate impact upon the decisions of individual employers, tempered only by the exhortations of the MSC to consider such training as an essential longterm investment. The likely outcome, in relation to the first objective of the NTI, would seem to be not only the removal of out-dated restrictions from the traditional apprenticeship system, but the removal of the system altogether with no alternative being put in its place.

The NTI objective of widening adult training opportunities led to the development of the 'Adult Training Strategy'. (60) This, as endorsed in Training For Jobs, consisted of a series of recommendations which were mainly concerned with the MSC's role as a catalyst in relation to the efforts of employers in this area of policy. Thus, the role of the MSC as a direct provider of training services was only to be at the margins of the strategy, involving the provision of distance learning opportunities through the Open Tech and the continuation of restructured versions of TOPS. With regard to the latter, it has already been noted how an increasing proportion of provision has come to be accounted for by basic level work preparation courses aimed at the adult unemployed. The Adult Training Strategy proposed that two separate programmes should be established, one for both employed and unemployed people which would be directed to known employment needs in industry, the other to provide unemployed people with training at a more basic level. Under these new arrangements, the White Paper envisaged more than double the existing number of people being trained annually, yet at no increase of cost. This was said to be possible as a result of tailoring provision to meet specific needs, though the possibility of establishing a loan scheme through which adult trainees would pay for their own training was also mentioned. (61) Whatever the case, it is clear that the actual volume of training provided for adults by the MSC will not be substantially increased from its present reduced level, though various ways may be found of spreading it more thinly in order to give the opposite impression.

One suggestion is that more basic level training for unemployed adults might be provided through short work preparation courses in conjunction with the existing Community and Voluntary Projects Programmes. The Community Programme, is the direct descendant (via the Community Enterprise Programme) of the Short Temporary Employment Programme which was set up alongside YOP in 1978 to cater for the long-term adult unemployed. After various ups and downs in between, 1983/84 saw a considerable expansion in the size of this programme. Nevertheless, there were still only some 113,000 filled places by the end of the year, compared with approaching one and a half million in the priority groups for which it was intended to cater. (62) As for the Voluntary Projects Programme, this is merely an experimental initiative designed to encourage projects which provide voluntary activities for unemployed people without affecting their entitlement to statutory benefits. By the end of January 1984, some 31,000 unemployed volunteers had taken part in the programme since its introduction in August 1982. (63) Clearly, in relation to the growing scale of long-term adult unemployment, these responses must still be considered as a token effort. The inclusion of a certain amount of basic level training does not change this fact, and neither does it change the fundamental nature of the Adult Training Strategy.

The essence of the Adult Training Strategy is clearly revealed by the terms in which it is endorsed within Training for Jobs. It is said to be 'entirely in line with the market-orientated approach to training that is now required'. (64) Some token response might be made to the needs of the long-term unemployed, but generally the provision of training for adults is to be governed by the narrowly defined economic considerations of the market. This, we have seen, applies also to skills training in general. Thus, a market-led approach has been adopted in relation to both objectives 1 and 3 of the New Training Initiative.

In conclusion, it must be recognised that the MSC has to a large extent withdrawn from the role that it was originally intended to play. The development programmes which it was set up to oversee

in both the employment and training services have ground to a halt, and in many respects been reversed. The reason for this is simple. The MSC's role as the coordinator of an active manpower policy, and its interpretation of this through the development of the employment and training services, assumed the wider context of full employment as guaranteed by a macro-economic policy of demand management. This context no longer exists, and the original policies do not make sense without it.

The demise of the MSC's original interpretation of its role in relation to an active manpower policy can be compared to the fate of the so-called 'organisationist' policy which was adopted before the First World War. At the end of the historical account presented in Chapter 2 above, it was noted that active manpower policy and organisationist policy were in many ways similar at a micro-economic level. (65) The essential difference lay in the macro-economic context in which each was assumed to operate. Thus, organisationist policy was designed for a macro-economic context in which it was assumed that a full employment equilibrium would be maintained by the 'natural' mechanism of the labour market. In contrast, active manpower policy was designed on the assumption that full employment would be guaranteed by the implementation of a Keynesian-style macro-economic policy of demand management. The interwar years showed that the market mechanism alone was not necessarily capable of sustaining a full employment equilibrium, and the long-term mass unemployment of that era totally overwhelmed the organisationist policy. The abandoning of the postwar commitment to a macro-economic policy of demand management has now left active manpower policy in the same situation. It is like a mechanism to regulate the flow of water through a dam which has been left on its own to face the flood as the rest of the structure has been demolished around it.

This can be seen not only in the case of the conventional employment and training services, but in all the other areas of activity that were originally associated with the development of an active manpower

policy. For example, as levels of unemployment have risen throughout the country, the economic rationale for a regional policy which attempts to ensure the efficient matching up of jobs with job-seekers has disappeared. The only justification left for such a policy is in social terms, the need being to provide some form of special help to attract jobs and thereby mitigate the condition of the worst unemployment blackspots - this almost inevitably at the expense of some other area, often only slightly more favoured. In this sense, regional policy becomes the geographical equivalent of special measures for young people and the long-term unemployed. The most that it can hope to achieve is a more equitable distribution of misery. This reality has been reflected in what has actually happened. Just as the development of conventional employment and training services has been curtailed, so has that of regional policy. The disappearance of the economic rationale has led to a withdrawal of central government resources, leaving what is essentially a token policy of social amelioration. (66)

Another important aspect of active manpower policy as it was originally defined, and one which was intended to be central to the role of the MSC, was the collection and coordination of labour market intelligence. (67) Thus, the development of the original manpower strategy of the Commission was seen as being dependent upon the Commission itself becoming 'an authoritative centre for manpower intelligence'. (68) Initially, a Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division was established within the central support services of the Commission, and subsequently a network of Regional Manpower Intelligence Units was introduced. (69) However, these have never developed into the authoritative centres of national and regional labour market intelligence which they were originally intended to become. Rather they have stagnated, and the most recent development has been the dispersal of the staff of the Manpower Intelligence and Planning Division to other operating and central support divisions. (70) In many other ways, beyond the particular role of the MSC, the general state of labour market intelligence appears to be have stagnated or even deteriorated over recent years.

This became evident, for example, during the local case study when it was attempted to obtain up-to-date statistics concerning the development of the local labour market. The reason for the failure of this aspect of active manpower policy to continue its development is basically the same as in the case of the other aspects of the policy. The rationale for the development of labour market intelligence was that it should provide the knowledge required for the planning of micro-adjustments through the active intervention of the employment and training services. When mass unemployment undermined the economic purpose of such micro-intervention, it also removed much of the motivation for developing the sources of information that were necessary for its planning. In addition the overwhelming scale of the unemployment problem has made detailed manpower planning seem not only pointless, but impossible.

Thus every aspect of the active manpower policy which the MSC was established in order to implement has been undermined by the relentless growth of unemployment. Yet, the final irony of the situation is that, even with more than three million people unemployed, skill shortages still emerge as soon as there is any sign of recovery in a particular sector. (71) In the circumstances where there still is a genuine need for such a policy, there no longer seems to be the capacity to respond.

One final point about the demise of this form of active manpower policy is that it need not be directly associated with the ideology of the Thatcher Government. Of course, to a certain extent it was a by-product of the general desire to cut public expenditure. But, beyond this, the continued existence of a policy of selective interference designed to improve the efficiency of the operation of the labour market was by no means necessarily incompatible with a macro-economic policy based on the principles of the free market. As we have seen with the organisationist policy at the beginning of this century, the forms of intervention usually associated with an active manpower policy could in theory as easily be regarded as positive adjuncts to a macro-economic policy of laissez-faire as to one based on the principles of Keynesian demand management.

Moreover, this is no less the case when laissez-faire economics are presented in their modern guise as monetarism. The incompatability only comes about in practice when as a result of such a macro-economic policy, mass unemployment overwhelms any mechanism for making finer adjustments between supply and demand in the labour market. In these circumstances, the scope for intervention which can be justified on economic grounds becomes severely narrowed, and at the same time it becomes detached from the forms of intervention which are most needed on social grounds. As a result, instead of a comprehensive form of active manpower policy in which economic and social objectives are closely integrated, all that is possible is narrowly defined economic interventions on the one hand and token special measures on the other.

This is precisely what happened following the breakdown of the organisationist policy during the depression of the interwar years. On the one hand, there were Training Centres whose intake was strictly limited in accordance with future employment prospects. On the other hand, there were special measures such as the Juvenile Unemployment Centres which acted principally as palliatives in relation to the vast scale of social need. (72) In modern times, the fate of many aspects of active manpower policy has been similar. Take for example the MSC's provision for adults. On the one hand, both the skills training courses run by TOPS and the employment placement services of the Jobcentre network have been run down in accordance with the decline in labour market demand. On the other hand, there has been the development of the special measures approach represented by the Community Programme which, although on a larger scale, is still only a token palliative in relation to huge numbers of long-term unemployed. The proposed introduction of a certain amount basic training into the Community Programme, as has already been explained, is unlikely to change the essential nature of this distinction between economic and social programmes, though it may cause a blurring of superficial appearances. Yet, the purpose of this argument is not simply to make out a case for history repeating itself. If we return now

to the central theme of provision for young people, it will be seen that there are some important differences in comparison with what happened during the twenties and thirties.

3. The Development of a Monetarist Active Manpower Policy

The original role of YOP as a special measure could be compared quite closely to that of the schemes for unemployed young people during the interwar years. The other side of the coin was the collapse of the apprenticeship system and the withdrawal of much of the government support provided for it through the network of Industrial Training Boards. Thus, initially, there was to a certain degree a repeat of the distinctive pattern of development between separate social and economic programmes. Yet, as we have seen, YOP rapidly outgrew its original definition as a special programme. Tied to the growth of youth unemployment by the political undertakings made on its behalf, it replaced a substantial proportion of the youth labour market. Thus, unlike the schemes of the twenties and thirties, and unlike the modern provision for the adult unemployed, YOP took on a scale and a degree of comprehensiveness which precluded it from any longer being regarded as merely a token special measure. This it will be remembered brought about a crisis both for the programme itself and in terms of the wider objectives of the Manpower Services Commission. Although YOP had grown in scale beyond the bounds of a special programme, it did not have a substantial positive role beyond that of a palliative which could be aligned with the MSC's conception of an active manpower policy. The solution, of course, was found in the development of YOP towards becoming a comprehensive and high quality training scheme in which both the social and economic objectives of an active manpower policy could be realised. Yet, as we have now seen, thus far the new Youth Training Scheme has largely failed to make the necessary transition. In many ways, it is merely a larger and more expensive social programme which is still not making a significant positive contribution in terms of the MSC's original conception of an active manpower policy. The seriousness of the implications of this should now be apparent, given the proportion of the MSC's budget devoted to YTS and the demise of its other activities associated with an active manpower policy. Yet, perhaps there is another direction from which the role of the new scheme can be looked on more positively.

The initial verdict on YOP was not simply that it acted predominantly as a social programme. It was also seen as having a real economic impact, though one which was different from that originally intended. Indeed, in terms of the programme's original economic objectives, this impact could be regarded as having been negative. Yet, if looked at from the new macro-economic perspective introduced by the Thatcher Government, the same effects - the undermining of youth wage rates and the subsidising of employers' labour costs - could be seen in a positive light. What is more, there was evidence to associate the development of these 'unintended' effects with the takeover of responsibility for the programme of the Conservative administration, and thereafter, it could be suggested that such effects were not only knowingly tolerated but encouraged to the point at which they must be regarded as having been intended.

Some of the evidence concerning the Government's intentions for YOP emerged from the process of planning its successor, and it is clear that YTS was originally envisaged by the Conservative administration as performing a similar role in relation to its macro-economic strategy, certainly in terms of undermining youth wage rates. It will be remembered that Norman Tebbit's original plan was for a scheme under which unemployed young people would be virtually compelled to accept an allowance of £15 by the withdrawal of their right to claim supplementary benefit. This seemed to have been averted by the Youth Task Group. Yet, on the evidence presented at the beginning of this chapter, it is arguable that at the end of its first year the new scheme resembled the original plan of the Government at least as closely as it did that which was unanimously agreed upon by the Task Group. The allowance had not been reduced to £15, but neither had its real value been maintained against inflation. The right to claim supplementary benefit had not been completely removed from unemployed young people, but it had been compromised by the liability of those who refused to join the scheme, or who left it early, to have the level of their benefit temporarily reduced. (73) In theory, the scheme

had been open to both employed and unemployed young people, but in practice it had continued as a special provision catering almost exclusively for the unemployed. Finally, it had failed to deliver the quality of training which was so crucial to the Task Group's plan.

What should now be apparent is that the pattern of development of YTS, which has thus far severely limited its capacity to make a positive contribution to the MSC's wider manpower strategy in the manner planned by the Youth Task Group, has not stopped it from making a positive contribution in terms of the Government's macro-economic strategy. In this respect, it could be said to have continued where YOP left off. Thus, it has continued to provide a downward influence upon youth wage levels and it has continued in effect to subsidise employers with free labour. The key factors which have brought about these effects, though not necessarily the same as those which have blocked the positive objectives intended by the Task Group, can neither be regarded as wholly unconnected.

The holding down of the level of the allowance and the introduction of an element of financial compulsion, although antithetical to the original principles of the Task Group Report, cannot be considered as of crucial importance in relation to the positive contribution that the scheme was intended to make to the MSC's wider manpower strategy. The key factor in this context was the quality of training. Yet, this can be regarded in certain respects as being inversely related to the degree of subsidy being offered by the scheme to employers. Thus, the less the quality of training required, the greater is the opportunity for the exploitation of the trainees as a form of free labour. There is of course the statutory element of 13 weeks off-the-job-training, but this has not stopped managing agencies entering the scheme with the clear objective of making a profit, and this is in addition to what they or individual employers providing the work experience element may gain from having the free use of the labour of the trainees. Also, substitution is not necessarily a less relevant

factor than it was in the case of YOP, though by now the youth labour market has been so transformed by these interventions that often there is no longer any 'normal' practice of recruitment in relationship to which such an abuse can be recognised. Yet, none of this is to say the Government has deliberately planned that the quality of training in YTS should be sub-standard. What can be said, though, is that it serves the Government's wider interests at least as well that employers should use YTS trainees as a form of free labour subsidy, as that the trainees should receive a high quality of training. There are gains for the Government on either side, yet arguably the subsidy effect is the more central to its strategy. What is more, the cost of guaranteeing high standards of quality would be far greater, and the long-term economic returns on such training must be considered most uncertain in the present environment. Thus, unlike the MSC, the Government has no reason to be particularly concerned that YTS has thus far largely failed to deliver the quality of training that it originally promised.

The other key factor for the MSC was that YTS should be a comprehensive scheme, catering for both employed and unemployed young people. Again it cannot be said that the Government has deliberately stopped it becoming such. However, the lack of resources being put into both the quality of content and the level of the allowance has ensured that the scheme is not a particularly attractive option to those who can find employment elsewhere. Also, the continuation of the Young Workers Scheme in direct competition during the first year of YTS demonstrated once again that the Government does not recognise comprehensiveness of training provision as an important objective. Under pressure, it has been prepared to compromise on this, restricting the YWS to 17 year olds, but still there is no reason to believe that it is particularly concerned that YTS has not thus far developed into a comprehensive scheme. It is the Young Workers Scheme, through its provision of a subsidy to encourage employers to reduce youth wages, which more directly expresses the Government's policy for the youth labour market,

unmediated by the need to maintain a consensus within the MSC. This policy does not require comprehensive training. It can be served almost equally well, either directly through the YWS or more obliquely through YTS as it has developed so far.

The conclusion which emerges is that, although both YOP and thus far YTS have failed to make a significant contribution to the MSC's original conception of active manpower policy, they have not failed to play a significant role in relation to the wider economic strategy of the Thatcher Government. Thus, as well as being social programmes and palliatives which in various ways have made youth unemployment seem more acceptable, they have made an active economic contribution. In this sense, they can be regarded as a form of active manpower policy, combining both economic and social objectives. Yet, it is a different form of active manpower policy from that on which the activities of the MSC were previously built.

It will be remembered that the MSC's original conception of an active manpower policy was formulated to act as an adjunct to a Keynesian-style macro-economic policy under which full employment was to be ensured by means of demand management. This form of active manpower policy was based on the intervention of the employment and training services to improve the speed and efficiency of the labour market in matching supply and demand. It has since been noted that such a manpower policy need not necessarily be regarded as incompatible with a different form of macro-economic policy based upon laissez-faire principles. However, if this macro-economic policy gives rise to mass unemployment, then the potential of the conventional form of manpower policy to make an active economic contribution is largely destroyed. What is now being suggested is that, under these circumstances, YOP and subsequently YTS have developed in such a way as to constitute an alternative form of active manpower policy: one which is not only compatible in theory with a monetarist macro-economic policy based on laissez-faire principles, but also capable of making a positive contribution when this macro-economic policy has given rise to mass unemployment.

In short, the argument is that the real role which YOP and YTS have come to play is that of a specifically monetarist active manpower policy.

If this is so, then it might be thought that the implications of the way in which YTS has thus far developed are not so serious for the overall philosophy of the MSC as was earlier indicated. One form of active manpower policy may be collapsing, but it is being replaced by another form. The MSC's role is to administer an active manpower policy within the framework of the Government's macro-economic strategy, therefore there should be no problem about its adopting this new form of 'monetarist' manpower policy. The situation, however, is not quite this simple. There are other important factors which need to be taken into consideration.

4. The Impasse for the MSC

The principles governing an active manpower policy, as originally adopted by the Manpower Services Commission, were first that it should serve an economic as well as a social function, and secondly that it should involve only limited direct intervention in the labour market. We have already seen that the alternative form of active manpower policy being proposed on the basis of the real role that has been played by YOP and YTS meets the first of these principles. In relation to the second, it was argued previously that the planning of YTS as a comprehensive scheme marked a recognition of the fact that the normal functions of the youth labour market for school leavers had been to a large extent replaced by these forms of state intervention. Yet, at the same time, this had the effect of separating off the whole age group from the normal adult labour market and thus in a sense restoring the principle of limited intervention. (74) While the comprehensiveness of YTS might not be so important within the new form of monetarist manpower policy as within the MSC's conventional form of active manpower policy, this does not create any particular problems in terms of this second principle. But, in addition to the two principles of an active manpower policy, there is a third principle of MSC philosophy to be considered - that of consensus-based policy-making. It is here that the real problems emerge for this new form of active manpower policy.

The MSC's original interpretation of active manpower policy, based on the development of employment and training services, not only combined economic and social objectives, but could be regarded as being in the mutual interest of both employers and trade unions. This element of mutual interest was of crucial importance, given that the whole constitution and mode of operation of the Commission was based upon the establishment of a tripartite consensus between these two major partners and the Government. The problem, as far as the MSC is concerned, with what I have described as the monetarist form of active manpower policy is that it does not offer this element of mutual interest and therefore cannot provide the necessary

basis for any future consensus. It is an approach which attempts to rectify the problems of the labour market in a manner which is clearly to the advantage of one of the major partners and therefore unacceptable to the other. What is more, unlike the MSC's original conception of active manpower policy, it is an approach that is integrally related to a macro-economic strategy about which there is no consensus. The Keynesian style macro-economic policy, in relationship to which active manpower policy was originally developed, provided the basis for the postwar political consensus of which the MSC itself was a product. The monetarist macro-economic strategy of the Thatcher Government provides no such basis for political consensus. Thus it would not seem to be a practical option for the MSC to adopt a form of manpower policy that is explicitly connected to this monetarist strategy.

If the above analysis is correct, the MSC is approaching an impasse in its development. This can be defined in terms of a few simple statements. The MSC's role is to administer an active manpower policy. Its constitution demands that this is a policy based on consensus. Its original policy, for which there was a consensus, no longer makes sense in the context of mass unemployment. An alternative policy, which is compatible with the new macro-economic situation cannot support a consensus. Thus, a contradiction has developed between the continuation of the MSC's role in the administration of an active manpower policy and the continuation of its form as a tripartite consensus-based institution. The remainder of this chapter will be concerned with a discussion of options for the future resolution of this contradiction and the implications which these might have for any subsequent assessment of the wider historical significance of the Youth Opportunities Programme.

5. Alternatives for the Future

The starting point of this discussion must be a consideration of the way in which the development of the contradiction has thus far manifested itself. In 1981/82, the New Training Initiative and the Youth Task Group Report succeeded in re-establishing the consensus required for the continued development of the training side of the MSC's approach to active manpower policy. Yet, subsequently, as we have seen, the key element in this policy - the Youth Training Scheme - has failed to develop in the way required for it to make a significant positive contribution. As was the case with YOP previously, the real economic impact of the scheme has been more closely aligned with the alternative form of monetarist manpower policy than with the policy on which the MSC has based its consensus. At the same time, the other aspects of the New Training Initiative have also to a large extent failed to make the positive contribution which they were intended to, and the demise of the active role of the employment services has continued. Thus, although the MSC has ostensibly been maintaining the development of its consensus-based active manpower policy, the balance of the real impact of its activities has been moving more closely towards the alternative form of monetarist manpower policy. Inevitably, this situation has placed the whole consensus-based approach of the MSC under considerable strain. The mounting tension can be viewed from two key angles, that of the Government and that of the trade union movement.

Since the original development of the New Training Initiative and the publication of the Youth Task Group Report in April 1982, there has been increasing evidence of the Thatcher Government attempting to exert more direct influence over the MSC's development of policy. The start of this trend was marked by the appointment of David Young as Chairman of the Commission in July 1982. (75) His predecessor, Sir Richard O'Brien, had come from

a business background and was associated to a certain extent with the CBI. Previously, there had been a tradition that the chairmanship of a tripartite body such as the Commission would be alternated between individuals drawn from either side of industry. However, David Young not only had no association with the trade union movement, but also was far more closely politically connected with the Government than his predecessor. Indeed, he could be seen primarily as a representative of the Government rather than either of the other two tripartite partners. As well as making the chairmanship a political appointment, there was interference with the nomination of the commissioner representing professional education interests, whose position may be regarded as being of key significance in the determination of the overall political balance of the Commission. (76) Thus, through making maximum use of its ability to influence the selection of the personnel who constitute the membership of the Commission, the Government has attempted to move the MSC's political centre of gravity closer to that of its own. In addition, when necessary, it has been prepared to use its ultimate power of control over the Commission's budget and policies in order to exert further pressure. Thus, for example, during the first year of YTS, there were a number of issues, such as the level of the trainees' allowance and the cuts applied to the 'Mode B' sector of provision, on which recommendations endorsed by both the Youth Training Board and the Commission itself were subsequently over-ruled by the Secretary of State for Employment. (77)

The Thatcher Government has been perfectly within its statutory rights in taking these measures to curtail the independence of the Commission. However, this exploitation of its formal legal powers, in order to undermine the delicate arms length relationship which previously existed between the Commission and the Department of Employment, has gone totally against the spirit of consensus on which the real constitution of the MSC has always necessarily been based. Thus, since the original adoption of

the New Training Initiative and the Youth Task Group Report, not only has the real impact of MSC policies moved away from the objectives expressed in these plans and towards those more directly aligned with Government policy, but also the whole nature of the Commission itself and its political relationship with the Government has been changed in a complementary direction. The main losers from this dual process of change have of course been those on the other side of the consensus, notably, but not exclusively, the trade unions. (78)

The Youth Task Group Report, it will be remembered, appeared in many ways as a triumph for the TUC leadership's policy of maintaining its membership of the Commission and attempting to influence the development of policy from the inside. Previously, the real impact being made by the development and performance of the Youth Opportunities Programme had led to a build up of pressure for the withdrawal of the active support of the trade union movement. The Youth Training Scheme as originally planned by the Government had appeared to be even less acceptable than YOP. Yet, as a result of the unanimity of the Youth Task Group Report, the Government had been forced to compromise on each of the key issues of concern, and a scheme had been produced which the TUC was able to recommend for the support of the wider trade union movement.

After one full year of YTS, the situation appears to have changed considerably. As we have seen, the new scheme has turned out to resemble the Government's original plan at least as closely as that of the Youth Task Group, and it has continued to fulfil the same real economic role as YOP did previously. Meanwhile, considerable ground has been lost elsewhere in relationship to other TUC and trade union objectives for the development of both training and employment services. In addition, the changes which have taken place in the nature of the Commission and its relationship to the Government have made it a far less hospitable environment for the exercise of trade union influence. Consequently, a new

wave of pressure is mounting within the trade union movement both for the withdrawal of active support from YTS and for pulling out of the MSC altogether.

As yet then the contradiction has only partially manifested itself and the situation is still confused. The MSC is still ostensibly continuing the development of its original consensus-based conception of active manpower policy, yet the real economic impact of its activities is becoming increasingly closely aligned with the alternative form of manpower policy which is exclusively linked to a monetarist macro-economic strategy. The Government is maintaining the formal constitution of the MSC as a semi-independent policy-making body, yet it is using all its available powers to exert an increasingly direct form of control. The TUC and the trade unions are maintaining their membership of the MSC and their formal support for its activities including YTS, but, as it is becoming more obvious how the Government is using the MSC and what are the real effects of policies such as YTS, the pressure is mounting once again within the trade union movement for a complete withdrawal of support. (79) The crisis point has not yet been reached, but it would seem that there must be some definite limit to the future development of these contradictory trends.

The only real way out of this contradiction would be if there was a dramatic economic recovery leading to a massive creation of jobs and the eventual restoration of full employment. Under these circumstances, the MSC's original conception of active manpower policy would once again make sense. The employment and training services would have an important and expanding role to play, matching up the vast numbers of the unemployed with the newly created jobs and making sure that they were equipped with the necessary skills. The Youth Training Scheme would not necessarily have the same degree of prominence as it does now, but this would be because of the expansion of other aspects of manpower policy and not because of any diminution of its importance. On the contrary,

in the context of such an economic recovery it would come into its own, performing a real economic function as a training scheme preparing young people to fill the newly created jobs. However, none of this seems to be very likely at the moment.

Expert opinions differ as to the likelihood of any future economic recovery, but there is virtual unanimity about the fact that there will be no return to full employment in the foreseeable future. It seems most unlikely that the present Government will undertake a dramatic U-turn in its macro-economic policy and very possible that it will be re-elected at the next General Election. Even if there were to be a change of Government, many are sceptical as to whether it could make a dramatic and immediate impact on the level of unemployment. It is now widely believed that there will be three million or more people unemployed well into the 1990s, and that the best that can be hoped for is that the situation will not deteriorate further.

Let us assume for the moment that the present Government stays in power for the next few years, that it continues with the same macro-economic policy and, at best, the level of unemployment gradually stabilises. Under such circumstances, there would be little economic rationale for making the investment required to develop YTS into genuine high quality training schemes. Equally, the economic contribution to be made by the other employment and training services catering for adults would be severely limited. In this latter case, it could be expected that there would be a continuation of the trend of division between narrowly defined economic schemes on the one hand, and token special measures on the other. However, in the case of provision for young people, such an option would no longer appear to be available. Having once offered comprehensive provision and made political guarantees to the young unemployed, it would seem to be virtually impossible to go back to a partial system of selective training and token special measures. The only option in political and social terms would be to carry on forward with the development of YTS: yet, as we

have already seen, there would not be sufficient economic rationale for its further development as a training scheme. The only positive economic role that could be pursued would be in terms of a continuation of the alternative monetarist manpower policy which has emerged from the previous development of YOP and YTS. But how far could this be taken before there would be a withdrawal of trade union support?

Throughout the latter half of YOP there were numerous threats made to withdraw trade union support, but as far as the TUC and the vast majority of the trade union movement were concerned they were never implemented. Each time a crisis point was reached, there would be new promises of improvements just around the corner, and each time this proved sufficient to secure another extension of credit, despite such promises having come to little in the past. The Youth Task Group Report can be regarded as the latest example in this series of promises. The fact that it too has come to little in terms of the key points of agreement apparently won by the trade union representatives cannot therefore necessarily be regarded as a sufficient cause for a complete withdrawal of trade union support. The factors which weighed against such a withdrawal of support in the case of YOP, apply equally to YTS. The trade union movement would lose most of what influence it does have over the development of the scheme and it would be widely condemned as putting its own interests before those of the young unemployed.

Beyond these particular factors, it is important to understand the depth of the commitment to the MSC of the trade union movement in general and the TUC leadership in particular. As we have seen, it was the TUC that was largely responsible for persuading the Heath Government to set up the MSC back in 1974. Subsequently, under the 1974-1979 Labour Government, the TUC played an influential role in the development of the Commission's policies, including the special measures leading up to YOP. Since 1979, its influence has been substantially reduced, but in certain respects the importance

of the MSC to the TUC has increased. One of the main functions of the TUC as an institution is to represent the collective interests of trade unions to the Government of the day. Its power and influence in this role was greatly enhanced by the trend of development towards a corporatist style of politics which has previously been described. However, the Thatcher Government has turned its back on this trend, and the TUC has found itself excluded from access to the decision-making process. The tripartite structures through which previously it was able to exert a considerable influence, if not actually dismantled, have been side-lined into becoming mere talking-shops, as for example, in the case of the National Economic Development Council. In this context, despite the adverse changes that it has undergone, the MSC remains for the TUC probably most significant forum through which it can attempt to exert an influence upon Government policy. (80) If the TUC were to recommend a withdrawal of trade union support from YTS, given that the scheme is now at the centre of MSC policy, it would make it virtually impossible to retain membership of the Commission. This would be an enormous sacrifice for the TUC. Yet, if pushed far enough, it must be assumed that there would be a point at which such a decision would have to be taken.

The most likely prospect of this point being reached in relation to the future development of YTS would be if the Government decided to revert to making the scheme in effect compulsory through the withdrawal of the right to claim supplementary benefit from unemployed 16 and 17 year olds. This right has already been compromised, and it still appears that it might be the Government's eventual intention to remove it completely. This can be understood as the next stage of the development of YTS in terms of its fulfillment of the objectives of the alternative monetarist form of manpower policy. Once the safety net of supplementary benefit was removed, there would be nothing to stop the further reduction

of the real value of the training allowance as originally intended by Norman Tebbit.

Equally, the subsidy effect of the scheme would be enhanced, as virtually all 16 and 17 year olds outside full-time education would become available to employers as a free labour force. With no other option available to most of these young people, the cost of the provision could be reduced in other ways apart from the reduction of the allowance, such as the dilution of training content. The result would be that the Government could claim that it had abolished youth unemployment, the expense of providing the palliative effect of the scheme would be reduced, and the positive contribution made to the Government's wider economic strategy would be greatly enhanced.

The agreement of the Youth Task Group that participation in YTS should be voluntary, and that therefore the safety net of supplementary benefit for young people should be retained, was arguably the single most important factor in securing trade union support for the development of the scheme. The implications of a compulsory scheme, as just described, explain why this was so. If the Government were to override the original agreement on this matter and withdraw supplementary benefit altogether, it still could not necessarily be assumed that the TUC would recommend a total withdrawal of the trade union support. However, if the Government's action was sufficiently blunt and explicit, there would be little alternative. What then would be the implications if this did happen and it led to a complete trade union pull out from the MSC?.

Without its tripartite structure, there would be little point to the MSC continuing to exist. If the trade unions were absent, it would no longer play the role of legitimation for Government policies in response to unemployment. Business interests could always be consulted directly if necessary, as could the local authorities and education interests. The Commission would finally

be left as the political and administration anachronism which it has threatened to become ever since 1979. Under these circumstances, the logical course of action for the Government would be to dismantle the whole structure. This might involve the privatisation of many of its operational functions. The reforms to the Skillcentre and Jobcentre networks can be regarded as preliminary moves in this direction, and already the vast majority of YTS is run by private managing agencies. All that would be needed would be some form of Government inspectorate to provide a minimal control of standards. This, together with the existing central functions of the MSC could easily be taken back under the direct responsibility of the Department of Employment. Any remaining operational functions which were not suitable candidates for privatisation, perhaps for example the adult special measures such as the Community Programme, might be transferred to another department like that of Health & Social Security. (81)

If the MSC were to disappear in this or any other similar manner, it would of course have further repercussions for YTS. The Government would be free to run the scheme completely as it wished. Managing agents would probably be given more autonomy and there would be even less concern with training standards. Following the logic of the monetarist manpower policy, YTS might well come to conform more closely with the Young Workers Scheme, particularly if the two were centrally administered alongside each other within the Department of Employment. Indeed, they might be combined into a single graduated scheme covering the whole of the 16-18 age group.

The result would be a completely separate Government subsidised youth labour market. Employers would have the use of young people's labour either for nothing or in return for a token contribution. Young people would receive 'pocket money' allowances and wages, and it would be assumed that they should still be financially dependent upon their parents. There might be high quality training in patches where it could be linked into a definite route of progression into full-time skilled employment. But, without any

dramatic improvement in the wider labour market, for many within such a compulsory scheme it would just be a period of conscripted cheap labour at the end of which they would still have no marketable skills and little prospect of a real job. Indeed, the situation created might be compared to that which prevailed in the pre-war youth labour market, where large numbers of young people were used as flexible cheap labour and then dumped when they required a full adult wage. This, after all, ensured that rates of youth unemployment were far less than those for adults.

What has been presented above is of course an extreme scenario. It serves to illustrate where the logic of one side of the present contradictory trends might lead. However, in reality, it is rare that such trends are followed through to their logical conclusions. Thus, it is probably more likely that the underlying contradiction will never fully surface, but will continue to propel a series of compromises through which opposing trends are allowed to co-exist. The capacity of the MSC to survive and flourish in an apparently hostile environment has already been well demonstrated. For the Government, the existence of such a tripartite structure does play an important role in legitimising a sensitive area of policy and encouraging the active cooperation of the wider community in its implementation. As has already been explained, it enhances the palliative value of schemes such as YOP and YTS by placing them to a certain extent outside politics. For these reasons, the Government might be reluctant to push the trade unions to the point where they would have no option but to withdraw their support. It would still want to move YTS and other aspects of manpower policy towards a more direct alignment with its macro-economic policy, but it would adopt a more cautious approach than that outlined above. Thus, for example, rather than a complete withdrawal of supplementary benefit, there might be just an extension of the partial withdrawal which presently applies to YTS refusers; and, instead of an actual cut in the level of the allowance, there might be a continuation of the failure to protect its real value against inflation. Meanwhile, the training content

could be developed sufficiently to maintain the plausibility of this as an economic objective in the context of the MSC's original conception of an active manpower policy. Thus, the ambiguity between the two alternative forms of active manpower policy would deliberately be allowed to continue unresolved, giving the TUC leadership just sufficient pretext to hang onto its position within the Commission.

Rather than being dismantled, the MSC might in fact further extend its activities by going beyond what are strictly speaking the boundaries of manpower policy and developing its role as an alternative education department. The initial emergence of this role has already been seen with the development of the pilot Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (T.V.E.I.) and the controversial proposals in the Training For Jobs White Paper for the take-over by the MSC of some twenty-five percent of work-related non-advanced further education.⁽⁸²⁾ In both of these cases, the Commission is being used by central government to bypass the traditional decentralised system of educational administration based on the autonomy of the local education authorities and the indirect funding mechanism of the block grant. In both cases the broad objective is the same - to promote a closer alignment between the educational system and the needs of industry. The link between the so-called 'Great Debate' on education and the launch of YOP was drawn attention to in Chapter 3. ⁽⁸³⁾ Implicit within the planning of the programme was the view that secondary education was failing to provide many young people with an adequate preparation for the transition to working life at the age of 16. In this sense, YOP was regarded as a temporary remedial provision for those minimum age school leavers experiencing difficulties in making the transition from school to work. The New Training Initiative not only established that a permanent and comprehensive bridge between school and work was required, but also it recognised the need for the process to begin at school. ⁽⁸⁴⁾ This provided the pretext for the extension of MSC activities back into the educational system.

As the catalytic agent of central government within the educational system, the MSC has thus to some extent developed a new role for itself. However, this role has its limits. Within the sphere of education, it is perhaps easier to establish consensus between the two sides of industry, but this tends to be at the expense of the alienation of educational interests whose active cooperation is also needed. Similarly, in an educational context, the MSC is able to distance itself from the contradictions involved in the development of manpower policy, but not to escape them altogether. Indeed, when it tries to increase the vocational relevance of education, it carries the contradictions involved in the development of training back into the educational system. Already the credibility of much academic and general education has been undermined by its assessment in terms of the failure of school leavers to obtain employment. Vocational education invites this form of assessment much more directly. The danger for the MSC's new role is that, without any major upturn in the labour market, the trend of greater vocationalism that it is attempting to introduce into education might also rapidly exhaust its credibility. The underlying problem is the same as in the case of YTS: vocational education and training can prepare young people for jobs, but it cannot ensure that these jobs are made available. This depends largely upon macro-economic policy.

If it is assumed that there is no major change in macro-economic policy, and also that the development of manpower policy is not taken to the monetarist style extreme but continues on an ambiguous path in which training objectives are also pursued and the MSC capitalises upon its sortie into the educational system, under such circumstances, what might be the most favourable outcome? The best case, as far as the macro-economic situation is concerned, would seem to be a recovery of sufficient strength to halt the further rise of unemployment. As far as manpower policy is concerned, it might be the development from the basis of YTS and TVEI of a comprehensive system of vocational education and training covering

the 14-18 age group , which would be of a sufficient quality to ensure that the vast majority of those completing it would be able to compete successfully and secure jobs in the adult labour market. If these two 'best cases' are imagined in combination, the result is paradoxical. The new competitiveness of those emerging from the vocational education and training system might virtually eliminate the immediate problem of youth unemployment. Yet, without any overall increase in the number of jobs available, this would have to be at the expense of some other group. The most likely candidates to be adversely affected would be those who are already unemployed. Thus, the result would be a reduction of the overall turnover between unemployment and employment, and a substantial increase in the scale and duration of long-term unemployment. Ironically, it is the long-term unemployed, alongside young people, who have been the main recipients of the MSC's special measures policy. What is more, many of those now entering the ranks of the long-term unemployed are those who previously went through YOP and were amongst the large proportion for whom it failed to secure permanent employment. The paradox is, therefore, that the very success of YTS might condemn a whole cohort of YOP 'graduates' to virtually permanent unemployment. As long-term adult unemployed, they would of course become eligible for the limited number of places on the Community Programme. With the planned addition of a certain amount of training content to this provision, for some it might be sufficient to restore their competitiveness in the labour market. Yet, their success would inevitably be at the expense of others, most likely those young people trying to enter the adult labour market from the vocational education and training system . Once again, it comes back to the fundamental underlying problem which cannot be resolved simply by the extension of training provision - the shortage of jobs.

Thus far, it has been assumed that there will be no major change of macro-economic policy and that the best that can be expected under these circumstances is that unemployment should stabilise at its present level. However, it is not this author's opinion that the

present level of unemployment is inevitable, whatever form of economic policy might be adopted. Certainly, the introduction of new technology does not make it inevitable. (85) Although the rapid pace of technological change may be aggravating the situation, the present high level of unemployment is, as in the interwar years, predominantly the result of an insufficient overall level of demand in the economy. Since the publication of Keynes' General Theory, the policies have existed to remedy this through macro-economic demand management. It is largely a question of political will whether they are adopted or not. This is not to say that such policies have been without problems when implemented in the past, but they have proved capable of maintaining virtually full employment over a prolonged period of time, so long as this has been regarded as the priority objective of economic policy. Furthermore, the associated problems, in particular the development of inflationary tendencies, need not be regarded as insurmountable obstacles. Thus, for example, there is no a priori reason why an incomes policy should not succeed; once again, it is largely a question of political will. However, the purpose here is not to detail an alternative economic strategy, but merely to note that such an alternative is not impossible. Consequently, it should not be ruled out that under changed political circumstances there could be a rapid and substantial reduction in the numbers of the unemployed leading back to a situation of practically full employment.

The implications of such a course of events, both for manpower policy in general and the development of youth training in particular, have already been touched upon. The employment and training services would once again have an important and expanding role to play, and YTS would come into its own, being able to perform a real economic function as a training scheme. However, this must not be regarded simply as a one-way relationship of cause and effect between the macro and micro economic levels. An efficient and effective macro-economic policy of reflation could not be implemented separately

and discretely from the development of the corresponding active manpower policy. This micro-level policy would have to be built in from the start as an integral element through which the process of reflation took place. Thus investment in the employment and training services would itself be a means of putting money back into the economy, and would have to be planned and developed directly alongside any programme of investment in job creation. As far as young people are concerned, the development of quality within YTS and other forms of vocational preparation would become an unambiguous economic requirement, determined by the jobs being created for them to fill. What is more, not only would the demand for high quality training become unambiguous, but also its definition and purpose. The provision would continue to fulfill a social role, but there would no longer be any question of its still being a special measure. Throughout the field of manpower policy, the potential would be created once more for the combining together of both economic and social objectives, and national and individual interests.

6. Implications for the Historical Judgement of YOP

Three very different scenarios for the future have been set out. Obviously, they do not cover the full range of possibilities, but they do clarify certain alternatives by marking three key points on the spectrum. The first two indicate the opposite extremes of possibility within the bounds of the present macro-economic context, and the third looks towards the potential that might be opened up by an alternative macro-economic policy. The final question which needs to be asked is what would be the implication for the historical judgement of the Youth Opportunities Programme of each of these different scenarios.

It can already be said, without looking into the future, that the massive expansion of YOP as a social programme has led to the effective abolition of the normal labour market for minimum age school leavers. The question which remains open concerns what it will have eventually been replaced with. If the first scenario were followed through, then it could be said that YOP had led to a state-sponsored recreation of the pre-war form of youth labour market, in which many young people were used as a cheap and flexible form of labour being discarded on reaching adulthood. If the third scenario were followed through, YOP might be judged to have been the starting point for the development of a comprehensive system of vocational education and training between 14 and 18, which was to become one of the keystones of an effective and efficient economic recovery leading to the restoration of full employment. Finally, within the second scenario, the same development of vocational education and training might genuinely be attempted, but the most that this could achieve would be the redistribution of unemployment, creating an almost permanent cohort of long-term unemployed, many of whom might ironically be ex-YOPs. Thus, the historical redemption of the Youth Opportunities Programme depends as much upon the development of macro-economic policy as upon the development of the Youth Training Scheme itself.

Footnotes

1. See MSC, Youth Task Group Report, April 1982, para. 4.4ff., and The Times Educational Supplement, 30th December 1983, p. 7.
2. See MSC, op.cit., paras. 5.25 and 7.2; and The Times Educational Supplement, op.cit. It should be noted that it was expected that 160,000 of the 460,000 entrants planned for in the first year would be employed.
3. See The Times Educational Supplement, op.cit.; and MSC Annual Report 83/84, p. 14. Reliable figures on exactly how many employed young people entered YTS during its first year are not easily obtainable. The estimate of 50,000 has been provided in an MSC internal document.
4. See ibid.
5. See The Times Educational Supplement, 23rd March 1984, 'School to Work' page.
6. The fact that the Government has taken back the underspend on YTS and that plans for the future are being made on the basis of a smaller number of entrants than originally intended, are signs that the non-comprehensive nature of the scheme is being accepted as the status quo. See The Guardian, 4th June 1984; and The Times Educational Supplement, 15th June 1984 and 20th June 1984.
7. See The Guardian, 25th June 1983, and The Times Educational Supplement, 1st July 1983.
8. See The Times Educational Supplement, 13th July 1984; and The Guardian, 21st July 1984.
9. In order to have maintained its real value since January 1982, the trainees' allowance in September 1984 would have had to be £28.61 according to the Retail Price Index, or £30.50 according to the Average Earnings Index. The equivalent figures to have maintained its real value since April 1978 were £35.62 and £40.01, respectively.
10. YTS was supposed originally to be a one billion pound scheme. In its first year, including administration, it cost only £777 million. See MSC, op.cit., p. 35.
11. See The Times Educational Supplement, 13th July 1984.
12. See The Times Educational Supplement, 2nd September 1983. Examples of rates achieved by the Transport and General Workers Union for trainees during 1983/84 include: Massey Ferguson - £74.86; Tate and Lyle (London Refineries) - £50.00; Rolls Royce Motors - £48.90; Cleveland Council - £43.48.
13. See The Times Educational Supplement, 25th May 1984; and The Guardian, 29th June 1983.

14. See MSC, Youth Task Group Report, para. 4.31(b).
15. See The Times Educational Supplement, 28th January 1983 and 4th February 1983.
16. Geoffrey Drain of NALGO quoted in op.cit., 26th August 1984.
17. See ibid.
18. See The Times Educational Supplement, 25th March 1983 and 6th January 1984, and Paul Ryan, 'The New Training Initiative After Two Years' in Lloyds Bank Review, April 1984, Number 152, p. 39.
19. See Paul Ryan, op.cit.
20. See MSC, op.cit., para. 5.23.
21. See ibid., para. 6.11.
22. See The Times Educational Supplement, 1st July 1983.
23. See Paul Ryan, op.cit.
24. See The Times Educational Supplement, op.cit.
25. See The Guardian, 14th April 1984.
26. See The Times Educational Supplement, 27th July 1984. It should however also be noted that subsequently a small number of regional Quality Advisers have been appointed drawn from backgrounds of experience either in education or industry.
27. See MSC, Annual Report 83/84, p. 16.
28. See Report by HM Inspectors on The Youth Training Scheme in Further Education; An HMI Survey, Department of Education and Science, 1984. This was reported in The Times Educational Supplement, 13th July 1984. Information which subsequently became available internally from the MSC's own Quality Assessors indicated that the staff training situation amongst Mode A providers was far worse than that in colleges. Thus, at the end of the first year, few work-based supervisors had received even the most basic briefing on the aims of YTS and their role within it - yet they are considered to be the central figures in making YTS effective as a training programme.
29. See The Times Educational Supplement, 18th May 1984 and 27th July 1984.
30. The six broad types of learning opportunity are as follows: basic skills including Information Technology; job specific and broadly related skills; world of work; world outside employment; skill transfer and ownership; personal effectiveness.

31. See The Times Educational Supplement, 18th May 1984.
32. See ibid., 30th March 1984.
33. See ibid., 25th May 1984, p. 13.
34. See ibid., 6th April 1984, 29th June 1984 and 20th July 1984.
35. See for example, Training for Jobs, Cmnd.9135, London, HMSO, January 1984, para. 21. David Young, as Chairman of the MSC, repeatedly made this assertion to the media.
36. Since the writing of this main text, figures have become available on the destinations of YTS leavers between April and July 1984. These indicate 56% finding work and a further 13% entering further education or training or intending to do so. However, these figures include a high proportion of early leavers who might be expected to be more likely to have found jobs, and for other reasons besides can only be regarded as very provisional. This, though, has not stopped Government Ministers from using them as the basis of highly inflated claims for the success of the scheme. The fact that such provisional figures have been put to this use is probably more significant than the figures themselves. It shows that as was the case with YOP previously, the credibility of YTS is likely to be based largely on its performance as a job-getter rather than on its intrinsic merits as a training scheme. It might also be recalled that YOP initially had far better placement figures than those which are now being used to demonstrate the success of YTS.
37. The analysis of spending figures which follows is drawn from MSC, op.cit., p. 35, Table 6.1.
38. It has been claimed by Youthaid that compared over the same length of training YTS has worked out cheaper than YOP. See The Morning Star, 21st March 1984.
39. This figure of 15% includes some £7 million spent on the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative which equally cannot be regarded as part of the MSC's conventional training role.
40. The Rayner scrutiny process involved an independent, cost-conscious investigation of specific activities within a department to see whether they were necessary, and, if so, whether they could be performed more efficiently, economically and effectively. The scrutinies were co-ordinated by a team led by Sir Derek Rayner who was brought to Whitehall from Marks and Spencer by the Conservative Government to instill into the civil service the principles of efficiency applying in private enterprise.
41. This report was made in March 1981. The immediate reaction of the MSC was to dismiss it, claiming that the scrutiny team had no remit to review the employment services and had failed to understand how the Jobcentres worked. See The Sunday Times, 31st May 1981.

42. The The Morning Star, 4th June 1982 and 10th September 1982.
43. See MSC, op.cit., p. 39; and The Sunday Times, op.cit. Some 600 staff were lost and thirteen rural Jobcentres closed directly as a result of the Rayner recommendations.
44. See MSC, op.cit., p. 35. There was only a 13% rise in cash prices over four years.
45. See ibid., p. 28, para. 5.7; The Guardian, 5th April 1984 and 27th April 1984; and The Morning Star, 12th April 1984. At present the new system is only at the pilot stage and is encountering widespread criticism which may lead to its re-formulation. As it is now planned, combined with the introduction of both video and computer technology, the new system could enable a further 1,400 staff to be cut over a four year period.
46. See MSC, Annual Report, 1974-75, p. 7. This was to be an expansion from 15,000 in 1971.
47. See Society of Civil and Public Servants, Back to Work, October 1982, p. 7.
48. See MSC, Annual Report, 1983-84, p. 21, Table 4.3
49. See ibid., Table 4.2.
50. See ibid.
51. See ibid., p. 35, Table 6.1
52. See ibid., p. 24, paras 4.15-4.18.
53. See The Guardian, 30th November 1984.
54. See MSC, Training for Skills: A Programme for Action, 1977.
55. See Joan K. Stringer and Jeremy Richardson, 'Policy Stability and Policy Change: Industrial Training 1964-1982', in Public Administration Bulletin, No. 39, September 1982, p. 28.
56. See MSC, Outlook on Training, July 1980. It should be noted, however, that the CBI dissented from this view.
57. See Training For Jobs, Cmnd.9135, London, HMSO, January 1984, p. 10, para 35.
58. See MSC, A New Training Initiative: An Agenda For Action, December 1981, para. 35.
59. See Training for Jobs, op.cit., para. 33.
60. This was first set out in an MSC discussion paper entitled Towards An Adult Training Strategy, which was published in April 1983.

61. See Training for Jobs, op.cit., para. 42.
62. See MSC, Annual Report 83/84, p. 30, Table 5.6. In April 1984, 1,218,200 people in the U.K. were recorded as having been unemployed for over a year continuously and a further 300,900 under 25s had been unemployed for over 6 months. A small number would have to be taken away both for those outside Great Britain and for those who were under 18, but also it should be noted that the overall total of long-term unemployed was rising relentlessly. (Source: Employment Gazette, May 1984).
63. See MSC, op.cit., p. 31, para. 5.17.
64. Training for Jobs, op.cit., p.12, para. 41.
65. See above, Chapter 2, p. 78.
66. See for example, The Guardian, 27th November 1984.
67. See above, Chapter 1, pp. 46-47.
68. MSC, Annual Report 1974-75, p. 28.
69. This followed from the publication of Towards a Comprehensive Manpower Policy in 1976.
70. See MSC, Annual Report, 1983-84, p. 43, para. 6.13.
71. See The Sunday Times, 25th November 1984.
72. See above, Chapter 2, p. 71ff.
73. At the time of writing, there have been strong rumours that the Government intends eventually to exclude 16 and 17 years olds completely from supplementary benefit.
74. See above, Chapter 5, p. 275.
75. David Young's appointment was widely regarded at the time as a political appointment which was not in accordance with the consensus-based philosophy of the Commission. He had previously been closely associated with Sir Keith Joseph and had been a director of the right wing Centre for Policy Studies. For contemporary press reaction see: The Guardian, 5th February 1982 and The Times 5th and 6th February 1982. David Young was only to remain as Chairman for just over two years, before being elevated into the House of Lords and made Cabinet Minister without Portfolio with a special responsibility for enterprise and job creation. Nevertheless, he had a considerable impact upon the Commission in terms of bringing it more directly in line with Government policies. For an assessment of his impact as Chairman, see The Times Educational Supplement, 14th September 1984. His replacement, Bryan Nicholson, has again been drawn from a business background, but appears to be a less overtly political figure. It is too early, however, to judge what his future significance might be.

76. See The Times Educational Supplement, 10th and 17th December 1982. The choice of the further education associations was over-ruled by Sir Keith Joseph and Norman Tebbit, and instead an individual thought to be more sympathetic to the Government was appointed. This was Mr Wilson Longden, a member of the education study group of the Centre for Policy Studies (which David Young had previously been in charge of, see previous footnote), the author of a Conservative Central Office publication on school governors, and then the president-elect of the Association of Vice Principals. The key importance of the appointment of the representative of professional educational interests on the Commission derives from the fact that there is a balance between the three TUC and the three CBI representatives, and between the two local authority association representatives, leaving only the educational representative and the Chairman to determine the overall political leaning. The fact that since his appointment Wilson Longden has not necessarily towed the Government line does not alter the significance of the way in which he was chosen (see The Times Educational Supplement, 5th October 1984).
77. Another key example of the Government over-ruling the Commission was in relation to the Training For Jobs White Paper, when the Secretary of State instructed that the take-over of a substantial portion of non-advanced further education should go ahead. See The Guardian, 19th and 21st September 1984.
78. The other main losers have been the local education authorities, as in the case of the implementation of the Training For Jobs White Paper referred to in the previous footnote.
79. This was evident at the 1984 Trades Union Congress. See The Guardian, 6th September 1984 and The Times Educational Supplement, 7th September 1984.
80. It was noticeable that the TUC was prepared to withdraw from the NEDC over the GCHQ affair, but not from the MSC.
81. This scenario resembles quite closely the proposals made with regard to the MSC by the right-wing Adam Smith Institute. See Adam Smith Institute, 'Employment Policy', The Omega File, London 1983, pp. 9-13.
82. The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative was launched by the MSC in 1982 to stimulate the provision of technical and vocational education for young people between 14 and 18. The first projects started in 1983 and involved 14 local education authorities. In September 1984, the number was expanded to 62 and it is the MSC's intention that all authorities should have the opportunity to take part, involving some three per cent of the age-group. The controversial proposals of the Training for Jobs White Paper for the MSC to take-over some twenty-five per cent of work-related non-advanced further education have already been mentioned. The relevant paragraphs of the White Paper are 43-53.

83. See above Chapter 3 pp. 129-130.
84. See MSC, A New Training Initiative: An Agenda for Action, op.cit., p. 7, para. 40.
85. It is a popular contemporary fallacy that the introduction of labour-saving new technology must inevitably keep reducing the sum total of work available to be done by human beings. The simplest way of refuting this crude form of technological determinism is by reference to history. The development of labour-saving technology can be regarded as being virtually a constant factor in economic history, at least since the first industrial revolution. Yet, despite periodic phases of mass unemployment, the predominant trend over this period has been an increase of the active labour force, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the total population. Obviously, therefore, there is no direct relationship between the introduction of new technology and the growth of unemployment. Indeed, the evidence suggests that in the long-term technology creates more jobs than it destroys. Of course, in the shorter term, particularly rapid technological developments may cause severe dislocation and this may be a contributory factor in the development of periodic phases of mass unemployment. But this is precisely where an active manpower policy is supposed to come into its own.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this final section is to provide a formal summary of the conclusions drawn by each of the previous chapters. The first three were concerned with the context from which the Youth Opportunities Programme emerged and the definition of its original objectives. The next three examined the actual development and performance of the programme in relation to these original objectives. The final two analysed the conclusions drawn from this account of the development and performance of YOP in the wider context established previously, considering the significance of changes in the programme's contemporary environment and of subsequent developments leading into the future.

Chapter 1 established that the creation of the Manpower Services Commission was the outcome of three historical trends: the development of active manpower policy as an adjunct to a macro-economic policy of demand management; the growth of the politics of corporatism; and the experimentation with 'hiving-off' as a means of administrative reform. These gave the Commission both its form as a tripartite quasi-governmental body and its content in terms of the philosophy of a comprehensive manpower policy. This philosophy was defined by three essential elements: the combination of both economic and social objectives; limited direct intervention in the labour market; and a consensus-based style of policy-making. The first two of these were the essential features of an active manpower policy, and the third was the key characteristic of a corporatist style of politics.

Chapter 2 concluded from an historical account of unemployment and government policy that the traditional role played by special measures for the relief of unemployment was to act as palliatives in the context of market-based macro-economic policies which had failed to maintain full employment. Since the Second World War, with the adoption of a Keynesian style macro-

economic policy of demand management, such special measures had not been necessary. The development of active manpower policy leading to the creation of the Manpower Services Commission was presented as a micro-economic refinement within this macro-economic framework.

The account presented in Chapter 3 of the MSC's development of special measures in response to the rising unemployment of the mid 1970s demonstrated that, despite the initial rationale made out in terms of an extension of active manpower policy, their essential role was that of palliatives as in the past. This role was linked to the contemporary political context of the Labour Government and its need to maintain the social contract agreement with the trade unions. The plans for the Youth Opportunities Programme, as set out in the Holland Report, could also be interpreted as an extension of active manpower policy. However, from the beginning, the political undertakings made on the behalf of the programme gave it the potential to develop exclusively as a social programme and beyond the terms of reference of an active manpower policy. This could be understood in the same political context as the development of the MSC's previous special measures as palliatives, though there was also the additional factor of the Great Debate on Education. Finally, it was noted that this modern development of special measures implied that at some point the macro-economic commitment to full employment had been dropped. Certainly, this was so by the time that YOP was launched.

Chapter 4 examined the quantitative development and performance of the Youth Opportunities Programme in relation to the objectives originally set out in the Holland Report. The account demonstrated how the programme grew in scale far beyond its original plans and as a result also developed a different balance of provision from that which had been intended. These were the results of the rapid and unpredicted growth of youth unemployment, combined with the political undertakings which committed the programme to respond to this growth. In terms of the most important of these under-

takings, that given to provide places for all unemployed minimum age school leavers, the performance of the programme was remarkably successful. However in terms of the other major quantitative criterion of performance, the enhancement of employability as measured by the placement statistics of scheme leavers, the performance of YOP was very disappointing. Also, despite the huge numbers being taken into the programme, there was no evidence of it having any positive long-term effect upon the youth unemployment statistics, though this is not to deny the short-term psychological benefits that it provided for many individual young people.

Chapter 5, which was concerned with the qualitative development and performance of the programme, was a complex and lengthy chapter. It started by making clear the link between qualitative issues and the question of the status and economic contribution of YOP as a training programme. The qualitative performance of the programme was then assessed in terms of three quantitative gauges of quality which were established during its first year - the proportion of trainees receiving off-the-job training, the volume of staff training, and the frequency of monitoring. On all three counts, the performance was adjudged to have been highly inadequate. Closely related to the failure of the programme in terms of monitoring and quality control was the question of the scale of abuses and side-effects such as substitution and displacement. On this issue, it was concluded that the programme destroyed permanent jobs at a considerably faster rate than it created them, even if this was assessed exclusively in terms of young people's jobs. Subsequently, various other quality improvement approaches were initiated, but their development was inevitably a long-term process. By midway through the five year lifespan of the programme, the combination of its huge quantitative growth and the lack of tangible quality improvement brought the development of YOP to a point of crisis. This crisis could be

understood in terms of the three main principles of the MSC's approach to a comprehensive manpower policy: the programme was failing to combine with its social role a positive economic contribution, in terms either of employability or training; it had grown beyond the definition of a special programme and was interfering substantially with the normal operation of the labour market; and, as a result of these two previous developments, its status as a voluntary, consensus-based programme was being endangered. Moreover, the growth of the scale of YOP meant that this was a crisis for the MSC as a whole. The way out was provided by the relaunching of YOP towards becoming a comprehensive, permanent and high quality training provision. This involved the integration of the future development of the programme within the wider framework of the New Training Initiative and the establishment of a consensus around the plans set out for the Youth Training Scheme by the Youth Task Group Report. At the same time, quality improvement initiatives were brought together and given a new impetus in the transitional forms which were introduced during the final year of YOP. However the significance of these developments, as with many other aspects of quality, could only really be judged at the local level.

Chapter 6 summarised, and integrated within the national level analysis, the conclusions drawn from the local case study which was undertaken in the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area between October 1982 and April 1983. These were largely concerned with the qualitative development and performance of the programme, though also sufficient quantitative data was supplied to establish that the case study was not based on an atypical local example. The first generalisation made concerned the immense variety and complexity of provision at the local level, and the way in which it did not necessarily correspond exactly with the formal categories established at the national level of analysis. Thereafter, questions were posed concerning relevance, quality of content, labour market interference, quality improvement initiatives, and the implications of all of these for the introduction of the Youth Training Scheme. Concerning the relevance

of the local programme, it was concluded that there was a rough and ready correspondence with the needs of the local labour market, but there was neither the information nor the resources necessary to make this any more systematic. With reference to quality of content, the case study revealed that this could neither be formally defined nor systematically measured and controlled, but to a large extent depended upon individual circumstances of personnel and organisations, and therefore was subject to a wide range of variation. On the question of the programme's interference with the normal workings of the labour market, no conclusion could be drawn concerning the overall scale of adverse interference, but it was clear that there were inherent dangers of permanent jobs being destroyed without there being any adequate means of controlling or measuring such effects either at the level of individual schemes or at the level of the local labour market as a whole. The overall impression given by the conclusions drawn in relation to these first three questions was of the lack of content of the programme at the local level, and its inability to escape from the alternatives of artificial irrelevance and real substitution. With reference to the impact of quality improvement initiatives, particularly during the final year of the programme, it was revealed that this was not as substantial as might have appeared from the national level of analysis and, in so far as they did make a difference, it was not necessarily relevant to the future development of the Youth Training Scheme. On the basis of this and the answers to the previous questions, it was concluded that the implication for YTS was that at the end of YOP almost everything remained to be done to transform it into a programme offering training of relevance and systematic high quality. Finally it was noted that, for all its criticisms, the local case study confirmed the positive value of the programme in personal terms to many individual trainees, despite its lack of positive impact on the labour market as a whole.

Chapter 7 first summarised the previous three chapters and concluded that YOP had succeeded to a large extent as a social programme, but had failed to fulfil a positive economic function and had given rise to significant negative economic side-effects. Thus, it was primarily a palliative which arguably had a net negative economic impact. As such, the programme played fundamentally the same role as previous special measures. However, it did so in the context of a changed political and economic environment. The initial development of modern special measures leading to the launch of YOP was explained in the context of the social contract relationship between the Labour Government and the trade union movement. The election of the Thatcher Government in 1979 gave rise to a fundamentally different context, in which the Keynesian macro-economic policy of demand management was replaced by the market-based doctrine of monetarism and consensus politics was explicitly rejected. This change appeared to undermine the basis of the MSC's philosophy of a comprehensive manpower policy, yet the Commission not only survived but, because of the huge growth of YOP, flourished. This could be explained partially by the continued role as a palliative that YOP was able to play in the context of Thatcherism, but also the programme appeared to take on a new form of economic role. Under the changed circumstances, the apparently negative and unintended side-effects of the operation of YOP could be interpreted rather as positive micro-economic adjuncts of the Government's macro-economic strategy, subsidising employers' labour costs and adding to the downward pressure upon youth wage levels. Yet, this could not necessarily be assumed to be a deliberate element of the Conservative Government's strategy. There were two particular objections: the programme had been initiated by the previous Labour Government; and thereafter it had continued to operate with the active cooperation of the majority of the trade union movement. In answer to the first of these objections, it was established that development of YOP which led to what were originally side-effects becoming its main economic function could be associated with the change of governments. Furthermore, there was evidence that

subsequently the Thatcher administration not only knowingly tolerated this development, but also encouraged it as a deliberate policy. Yet, if this was the case, it was still necessary to explain the continued cooperation of the trade union movement. The explanation given was both in terms of the extreme political difficulty of withdrawing support from a measure which brought so many individual young people tangible benefits as a social programme, and in terms of the argument that only by remaining actively involved could the trade union movement have any influence over the way in which the programme developed. Given the failure of the TUC to achieve many of its key objectives in relation to YOP, this latter argument depended in the last analysis upon the claim that the Government's original plans for the Youth Training Scheme had been substantially altered through the Youth Task Group and that the new scheme would turn out to be fundamentally different from YOP. Thus for the trade union movement in particular, as well as the MSC in general, the redemption of YOP depended upon the implementation of YTS.

Chapter 8 started with a brief analysis of the development and performance of the Youth Training Scheme during its first full year. This concluded that, on all of the key points of difference, the scheme had turned out to resemble more closely the original plans of the Government rather than those of the Youth Task Group, and that it had repeated rather than redeemed the shortcomings of YOP. The implications of this for the MSC's original interpretation of active manpower policy were regarded as being serious. The new scheme was accounting for a substantial proportion of the Commission's budget, but was still failing to make a significant contribution in terms of this form of manpower policy. Moreover, there had been a steady decline in the conventional activities of the training and employment services through which it had originally been intended that the policy should be implemented. The purpose of these activities was undermined by the growth of mass unemployment and, as in the past under similar circumstances, there was a dichotomy emerging between manpower policies based on narrow economic criteria and token special measures acting as palliatives. Yet, in the case of YOP

and YTS, history was not simply repeating itself. They could no longer be regarded as mere special measures and they were failing to make a significant contribution to the Commission's original interpretation of an active manpower policy, but they were nevertheless having economic effects which could be regarded as positive within the context of the macro-economic policy of the Thatcher administration. Thus, it was argued that the real role which YOP and YTS had come to play was that of a specifically monetarist active manpower policy. While this alternative role could be fitted in with the first two essential elements of the MSC's philosophy of a comprehensive manpower policy as defined in Chapter 1, it was incompatible with the third element - the consensus-based style of policy-making. Consequently, it was concluded that the Commission's development appeared to be approaching a point of impasse. Three scenarios were considered of how these contradictory trends might work out in the future and what might be the implications for the subsequent historical judgement of YOP. The first of these drew out the most extreme logic of the development of monetarist manpower policy which led to the abolition of the MSC, and a state-sponsored recreation of the pre-war youth labour market in which many young people were used as a cheap and flexible form of labour before being discarded on reaching adulthood. The second considered the optimum development of youth training within the restraints of existing macro-economic policy, and concluded that the most that this could achieve was a redistribution of unemployment, creating an almost permanent cohort of long-term unemployed, many of whom might be ex-YOPs. The third scenario assumed an alternative macro-economic policy and showed the potential in this context whereby YOP might subsequently be judged as the starting point for the development of a comprehensive system of vocational education and training between 14 and 18, which would become one of the keystones of an effective and efficient economic recovery leading to the restoration of full employment. It was concluded therefore that the historical redemption of YOP depended as much upon the development of macro-economic policy as upon the success of YTS itself.

APPENDIX YOP IN THE PORTSMOUTH TRAVEL-TO-WORK AREAI INTRODUCTION

The local case study was carried out in the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area during the period between October 1982 and April 1983. There were two main phases of research. The first consisted of the collection of background information about the local labour market and the development of YOP provision within it. The second involved a series of visits to a sample of the local schemes and courses. The principal concern of this section is with the data collected during the first phase. The object is to provide an account of the local context within which the particular schemes and courses were operating. However, first it is necessary to answer two preliminary questions.

- (1) Why was it decided to carry out such a local case study?
- (2) Why was the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area chosen for this purpose?

1. Why a local case study?

The rationale for including a local case study as a part of this research can be explained both in terms of a general principle of methodology, and in terms of the specific nature of the object of research, the Youth Opportunities Programme. The general methodological principle is, quite simply, that the effects of any institution, policy or programme can never be fully understood without a close examination of the way in which it operates at the 'ground level'; i.e., the level at which it makes its direct impact upon society. It is never possible simply to deduce the effects of a policy from the way in which it has been presented by policy-makers at the national level.

The 'ground level' of the Youth Opportunities Programme consisted of individual schemes and courses set within the context of particular local labour markets. It has already been noted that quality of content could only be directly assessed within the work places and training establishments that catered for the trainees. However, the contribution of any one of these schemes and courses could not be understood in isolation. They were each part of a range of provision designed as a collective response to the needs of the young unemployed within a particular locality.

Obviously, youth unemployment exists as a national problem. However, young people's experience of being unemployed is generally restricted within the context of a specific local labour market. Research carried out amongst 16 year old school leavers has indicated that for the vast majority of this age group the geographical area of their job search is confined to within a few miles radius of their homes.⁽¹⁾ The sense in which youth unemployment is thus a local problem was recognised by the MSC in its organisation and delivery of the various special programmes. From the start, JCP put great emphasis on local initiatives. Likewise, the Holland Report stressed at a number of points the importance of YOP being responsive to local needs. This applied both to the overall balance between different types of scheme, and to the content of individual schemes and courses. This, it was recognised, would require a focus of planning and organisation at the local level as well as the

national level. Thus, it was proposed that there should be the maximum possible delegation of authority to local levels and that local area boards should be established in order to ensure the active involvement of key interests in the local community. (2)

It is clear then that the performance of a programme such as YOP could not be adequately assessed without examining the range of provision available in at least one particular local labour market. Obviously, an argument could be made for examining more than one local labour market. However, given limited time and resources, I decided that they would be best spent on an in-depth examination of one particular labour market, rather than being spread thinly over a number of local studies. There are limits to how far one can generalise from a single local study, but by relating certain of the background statistics to their national equivalents, some indication can be given of how representative the local situation might have been.

2. Why the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area?

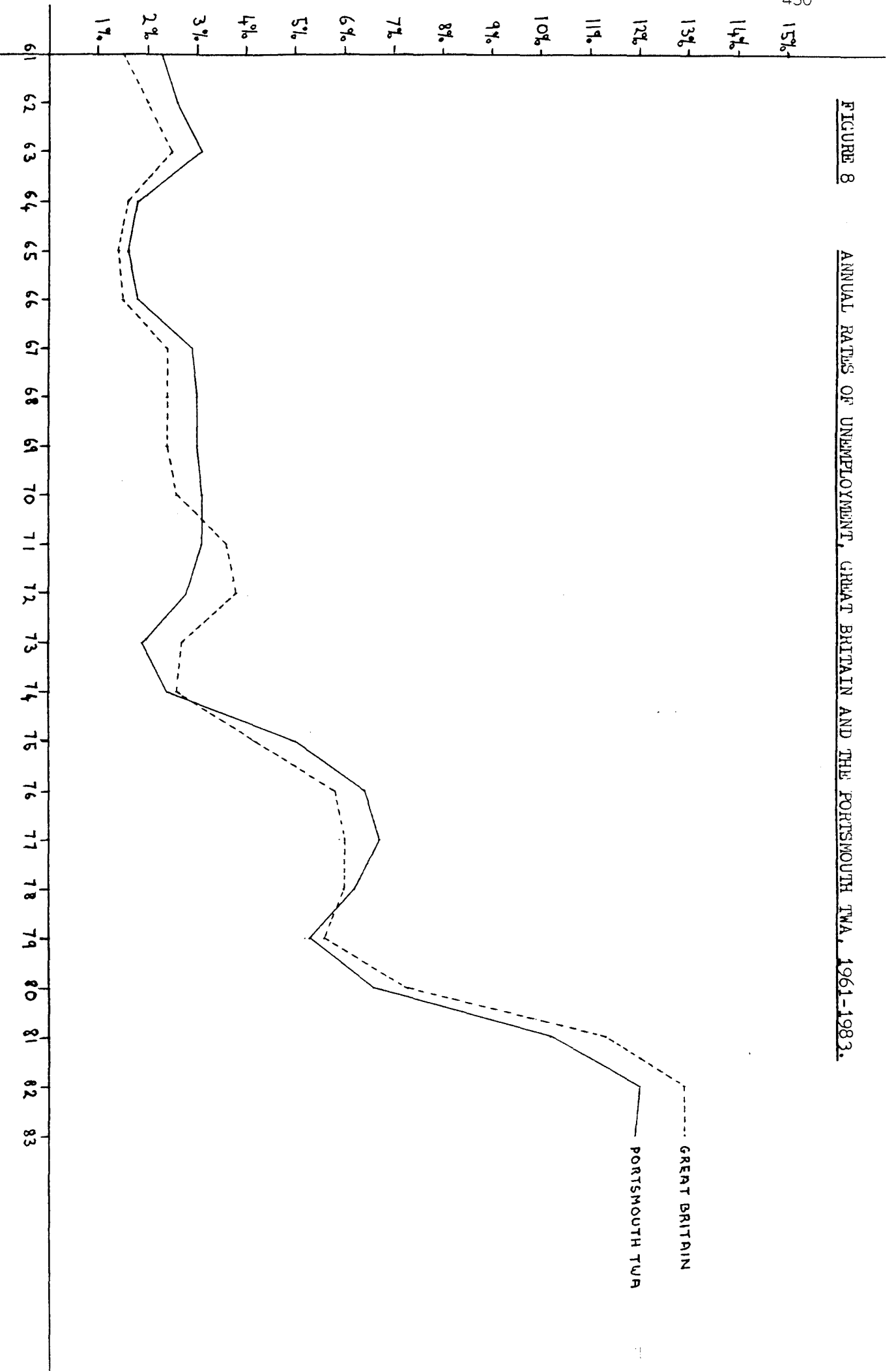
The choice of the Portsmouth area as the local labour market in which to conduct the case study was, in the first place, a matter of personal interest and convenience. I had been resident in the area for many years, and thus was already familiar with much of the background information concerning the locality, as well as being particularly interested to find out more. However, there were also certain objective factors which confirmed the suitability of this choice.

The first of these was that the overall rate of unemployment within the area was not abnormal by national standards. Figure 8 presents a picture of the relationship between the annual rate of unemployment in the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area and that for Great Britain as a whole, over the period between 1961 and 1983.⁽³⁾ From this it can be seen that over a period of more than twenty years the Portsmouth rate remained closely in line with the national rate, sometimes being slightly above and sometimes being slightly below. In 1978, when YOP was launched, the Portsmouth rate was marginally above the national average. By 1979 this situation was reversed and thereafter, as unemployment rose rapidly both nationally and locally, the Portsmouth figure remained approximately one per cent below the national figure. Thus, although situated in the prosperous South East, the scale of Portsmouth's unemployment can be considered fairly representative of the national problem.

In terms of structure, the local labour market could also be considered in certain respects to represent a microcosm of the national situation. The largest industrial employer in the area, the Naval Dockyard, had been steadily running down its labour force since the late 1950s, and further more drastic cuts were planned for the future. Thus, many of the traditional industrial and craft skills present in the local labour force were no longer likely to be needed, and nor were the training facilities which in the past had provided local young people with apprenticeships in these skills. Yet, over the same period, there had been a significant diversification of the local economy. During the fifties and sixties, a number of technologically advanced electrical and electronic engineering firms had moved into the area. This had been

FIGURE 8

ANNUAL RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT, GREAT BRITAIN AND THE PORTSMOUTH TWA, 1961-1983.



followed in the late sixties and early seventies by various commercial office developments in the Portsmouth city centre, and widespread growth of local authority and public service employment. Finally a start had been made upon the expansion of the commercial docks facilities, which it was hoped would stimulate a revival of the traditional local tourist industry.⁽⁴⁾ Until the onset of the recession in the mid seventies, the rapid growth of these new industries and services had more than compensated for the loss of jobs in traditional industries.⁽⁵⁾ Although in more recent years their development had slowed, and in some cases been reversed, it was still generally acknowledged that they retained a great potential for further growth, given more favourable circumstances in the future. Thus, alongside each other within the same local labour market, there existed both the problem of declining traditional industries and the potential of developing industries based on new technologies and services.

A final factor supporting my choice of the Portsmouth area was its uniqueness. Although typical, both in the extent of its unemployment and in the changing pattern of its industrial structure, the area also had certain unique features, most of which stemmed from its traditional association with the Navy. Given the requirement that YOP should be responsive to particular local needs, I considered it an advantage that the area to be studied should in some respects have a distinct individual character.

Having explained the choice of Portsmouth, it is necessary also to say something about the geographical unit of the 'Travel-to-Work Area.' The main criteria when selecting the unit of study were: a) that it should be a unit for which statistical information was readily available; b) that it should correspond with the area of a coherent and recognised local labour market and; c) that it should bear some relation to the geographical structure of the main organisations responsible for the administration of YOP. Although not without its problems, the Travel-to-Work Area appeared to be the best choice when judged according to these criteria.

The smallest geographical unit for which the Department of Employment and the MSC collect employment and unemployment statistics is an

employment office area.⁽⁶⁾ However, there are various problems involved with the use of statistics collected on the basis of these areas. In terms of local labour markets, the definition of their boundaries is often arbitrary, taking no account of travel-to-work patterns. Given that a substantial proportion of the population may live in one employment office area and work in another,⁽⁷⁾ the calculation of an unemployment rate for such an area could never be reliable. Thus, for many purposes, it is more appropriate to combine a number of employment office areas into a group which corresponds to a reasonably self-contained and yet homogeneous local labour market. Such a grouping is known as a 'travel-to-work' area.

Employment office areas do not necessarily correspond with local authority or other administrative boundaries, and thus neither do travel-to-work areas. Nevertheless, the concept is well recognised within both central and local government, and the areas themselves are unambiguously defined according to established criteria. The fundamental characteristic of a travel-to-work area is that at least 80 per cent of the people who work within it also live within it, and that 80 per cent of the residents work there. In all, there are about 250 such travel-to-work areas throughout the country.

The Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area (TWA), which is highlighted on the map of Hampshire that is provided by Figure 9, is made up of five employment office areas covering approximately 340 square miles in the South East of Hampshire. The five employment offices are Portsmouth, Gosport, Fareham, Havant, and Petersfield & Liphook. By definition, as a travel-to-work area, it had certain recommendations according to the first two criteria of choice for a local unit of study. It was an area for which employment and unemployment statistics were available, and it constituted a coherent and recognised local labour market. However, when it came to the third criterion, the position was more problematical.

The principal organisations concerned with the local administration of YOP were the two operational divisions of the MSC and the Careers Service. The Special Programmes Division and the Training Services Division each had their own local network of offices. Thus, the SPD

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was organised on the basis of 41 local area offices and the TSD on the basis of 47 district offices. With regard to the Portsmouth TWA, although the SPD and the TSD offices were located in different places, the geographical area that they covered was the same. However, this area consisted not merely of the Portsmouth TWA, but of the whole of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The Careers Service, as a responsibility of the local education authority was organised on a county-wide basis for the whole of Hampshire. However, since September 1978, for administrative purposes it had been divided into three divisional areas, each corresponding approximately to a travel-to-work area. Within this organisational framework, the South East Hampshire Division of the Careers Service was the approximate equivalent of the Portsmouth TWA.⁽⁸⁾ Each division had its own team of specialist careers officers, known as the Industrial and Educational Liaison (I.E.L.) Section, which was responsible for dealing with the young unemployed. Thus, although the Careers Service was a county-wide organisation, its specialist response to youth unemployment was co-ordinated at a divisional level, which in the case of the South East Hampshire Division was for practical purposes the equivalent of the Portsmouth TWA.

The local area office of the SPD had set up corresponding teams of link officers responsible for coordinating YOP provision in specific localities. The number of these teams varied, increasing as the scale of the Programme grew. Thus, although they were closely associated with the Careers Service divisions, there was not always a one-to-one relationship. At one time, a single team covered both South East Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Towards the end of the Programme, South East Hampshire was divided between two teams. Nevertheless, the divisional organisation of the Careers Service always ensured that South East Hampshire retained its significance as a local unit in the organisation of the Programme.

Thus, the Portsmouth TWA fulfilled the third criterion of choice for selection as the local unit of study: it bore some correspondence to the geographical structure of the main organisations responsible for the local administration of YOP. However, this correspondence was by

no means exact. It is arguable therefore, on the basis of this criterion, that it might have been better to choose either Hampshire or Hampshire and the Isle of Wight as the local area of study. This argument was reinforced in relation to the first criterion of choice - the availability of statistical data - by the fact that certain statistical information concerning the operational details of the Programme was only available for either Hampshire or Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and not for South East Hampshire. However, neither Hampshire nor Hampshire and the Isle of Wight were meaningful units in terms of local labour markets.

In conclusion, it can be said that in balance the Portsmouth TWA came nearest to meeting the three criteria laid down for the choice of a local area of study. But it was not an unproblematical choice. In particular, it will be seen that certain important information concerning the operation of YOP within the Portsmouth TWA was lacking. Where this was the case, the information has been given for the nearest alternative geographical unit, usually Hampshire as a whole. On the basis of such information, it has sometimes been possible to make estimates for the smaller geographical unit. Thus, the focus remains throughout on the Portsmouth TWA, even if at times the picture has to be built up through a collage of information from different geographical units. Whatever the area chosen, such problems would have arisen. To a large extent they were indicative of the problems faced by the Programme itself in its attempt to co-ordinate a diverse array of organisations operating at different geographical levels into a coherent local response to youth unemployment.

3. The Portsmouth TWA., Employment and Economic Activity

Having explained the choice of the Portsmouth TWA as the area of study, it is now necessary to give some more background information about the area. The City of Portsmouth is the most densely populated large provincial city in the country.⁽⁹⁾ It is surrounded on its landward side by a ring of suburban development consisting of the townships of Fareham, Gosport and Havant. Beyond these, there are the more outlying rural areas included in the East Hampshire and Winchester districts. In socio-economic terms, the area as a whole is relatively heterogeneous. Portsmouth itself has always been a comparatively poor industrial city situated in a comparatively wealthy shire county. After the Second World War, a large number of Portsmouth's poorer families were re-housed in the surrounding townships, particularly in the Havant area. But still, as a generalisation, it can be said that the city is poor compared with the surrounding suburban and rural areas within the TWA. Politically, however, the character of the area as a whole is more uniform. There is a solid Conservative majority on the Hampshire County Council, and all the District, Borough and City Councils included within the Portsmouth TWA are also Conservative.

In the process of explaining the choice of the Portsmouth TWA for this case study, certain information has already been provided concerning the local economy and the rate of unemployment within it. Unfortunately, however, there was a lack of detailed up-to-date information concerning the scale and structure of local employment. The most recent Census of Employment had been carried out in 1981, but the local breakdown of its results was still being awaited at the time when this research was carried out. As a consequence, it was necessary to go back to the 1977 Census in order to find reliable statistics for the number and distribution of employees in employment within the TWA.⁽¹⁰⁾

Table 12 provides an industrial analysis of employees in employment within the Portsmouth TWA in March 1977.⁽¹¹⁾ From this it can be seen that the six industrial orders providing the largest percentages of local employment were then as follows: Professional and Scientific Services (16.1%); Distributive Trades (12.3%); Miscellaneous Services (10.7%); Public Administration and Defence (10.5%); Electrical

TABLE 12 INDUSTRIAL ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEES IN EMPLOYMENT: GREAT BRITAIN AND THE PORTSMOUTH TWA

S.I.C. ORDERS	GB		PTWA		PTWA%	GB		PTWA (EST.)	
	MARCH 1977		MARCH 1977		GB%	JUNE 1982		JUNE 1982	
	Thos.	%	Thos.	%	3/77	Thos.	%	Thos.	%
1 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	358	1.6	2.0	1.1	0.69	346	1.7	1.9	1.1
2 Mining and Quarrying	345	1.6	0.1	0.1	0.06	325	1.6	0.1	0.1
3 Food, Drink and Tobacco	682	3.1	2.5	1.3	0.42	605	2.9	2.2	1.2
4 Coal and Petroleum Products	37	0.2	-	-	0.00	26	0.1	-	-
5 Chemical and Allied Industries	431	2.0	4.1	2.2	1.10	388	1.9	3.7	2.1
6 Metal Manufacture	481	2.2	0.3	0.2	0.09	294	1.4	0.2	0.1
7 Mechanical Engineering	916	4.2	8.5	4.5	1.07	724	3.5	6.7	3.7
8 Instrument Engineering	148	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.29	129	0.6	0.3	0.2
9 Electrical Engineering	744	3.4	17.0	8.9	2.62	640	3.1	14.6	8.1
10 Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering	173	0.8	14.4	7.6	9.50	140	0.7	11.7	6.5
11 Vehicles	743	3.4	4.8	2.5	0.74	547	2.7	3.5	1.9
12 Metal Goods not elsewhere specified	530	2.4	1.9	1.0	0.42	428	2.1	1.5	0.8
13 Textiles	480	2.2	0.2	0.1	0.05	298	1.4	0.1	0.1
14 Leather, Leather Goods and Fur	41	0.2	-	-	0.00	29	0.1	-	-
15 Clothing and Footwear	367	1.7	2.3	1.2	0.71	260	1.3	1.6	0.9
16 Bricks, Pottery, Glass, Cement, etc.	256	1.2	0.5	0.3	0.25	204	1.0	0.4	0.2
17 Timber, Furniture, etc.	257	1.2	1.6	0.8	0.67	203	1.0	1.3	0.7
18 Paper, Printing and Publishing	529	2.4	2.6	1.4	0.58	493	2.4	2.4	1.3
19 Other Manufacturing Industries	325	1.5	4.4	2.3	1.53	236	1.1	3.2	1.8
20 Construction	1225	5.6	9.4	4.9	0.88	1011	4.9	7.8	4.3
21 Gas, Electricity and Water	339	1.5	2.4	1.3	0.87	329	1.6	2.3	1.3
22 Transport and Communication	1441	6.6	8.0	4.2	0.64	1372	6.7	7.6	4.2
23 Distributive Trades	2674	12.2	23.5	12.3	1.01	2653	12.9	23.3	12.9
24 Insurance, Banking, Finance and Business Services	1117	5.1	8.7	4.6	0.90	1305	6.3	10.2	5.7
25 Professional and Scientific Services	3572	16.3	30.7	16.1	0.99	3650	17.7	31.4	17.4
26 Miscellaneous Services	2196	10.0	20.4	10.7	1.07	2484	12.0	23.0	12.8
27 Public Administration and Defence	1561	7.1	20.1	10.5	1.48	1497	7.3	19.3	10.7
28 Unclassified									
TOTALS	21969		190.7			20614		180.3	
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.

Engineering (8.9%); and Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering (7.6%). Between them these six industrial orders accounted for almost exactly two-thirds of employment within the TWA.

Table 12 also provides an industrial analysis of employment throughout Great Britain in March 1977, with which the Portsmouth TWA analysis can be compared. From this it can be seen that in certain respects the industrial distribution of employment within the Portsmouth area was very similar to the national pattern. Thus, for example, the four leading industrial orders were the same, and came in the same order, both nationally and locally. However, there were also some important differences. Column 5 of Table B allows these to be systematically identified by dividing the Portsmouth TWA percentages by the national percentages in order to provide a Portsmouth TWA 'location quotient' for each industrial order. This reveals that, in 1977, the Portsmouth area had higher than average concentrations of employment in 8 of the 27 industrial orders, and that its two main areas of specialisation were in the manufacturing industrial orders of Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering, and Electrical Engineering.

The location quotient of 9.5 for Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering shows that, despite the process of industrial diversification that has been referred to, this traditional local industry still retained, in the latter half of the 1970s, a very significant position in the local labour market of the Portsmouth area. This position, of course, depended largely upon the employment provided by the Naval Dockyard, but there were other important local employers in this industry, such as Vosper Thornycroft/British Shipbuilders. The location quotient for Electrical Engineering reveals a local concentration of employment within this industrial order of more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the national average. In fact, the bulk of local employment that was included within this particular industrial order could be described more precisely as the manufacture of electronic apparatus rather than electrical engineering per se.⁽¹²⁾ This involved firms such as IBM, Marconi and Plessey, which could be considered to be working at the frontiers of the development and manufacture of the new electronic technology. It should also be pointed out that much of this local electronics industry was, and still is, heavily dependent upon defence contracts. Finally, another indication

of the importance of defence-related employment within the local economy was the fact that Portsmouth TWA had almost 1½ times the average concentration of jobs in the category of Public Administration and Defence.

The lack of more recent statistical information concerning employment in the Portsmouth TWA has already been referred to. The second half of Table 12 attempts to remedy this by making estimates for the Portsmouth TWA on the basis of the most up-to-date national statistics available. Columns 6 and 7 reproduce the figures given by the December 1982 edition of the Employment Gazette for the industrial distribution of employees in employment throughout Great Britain in June 1982.⁽¹³⁾ The estimates provided for the Portsmouth TWA in columns 8 and 9 have been made on the assumption that the national trends within each industrial order will have been reproduced at the local level.⁽¹⁴⁾

The main impact of such an assumption upon the local figures is to bring about a general increase in the proportion of service employment, and corresponding decreases in the proportions of manufacturing and construction employment. Thus, the estimates show an increase from 59.4 per cent to 63.7 per cent for the service industries, and decreases from 34.5 per cent to 29.6 per cent from from 4.9 per cent to 4.3 per cent for the manufacturing and construction industries respectively. The total of the estimates for the number employed in each industrial order indicates an overall reduction in the number of employees in employment within the TWA from approximately 190,000 in 1977 to approximately 180,000 in 1982.⁽¹⁵⁾

The evidence from national trends must be supplemented by a factor which is of particular local significance. In June 1981, the Government published a White Paper on Defence which proposed a series of severe cuts in the Navy, including "a very sharp reduction in the scope and volume of dockyard work at Portsmouth."⁽¹⁶⁾ The implication of this for the Dockyard work force was a reduction from 7,200 to 1,200 by 1984. As well as these 6,000 jobs to be lost within the Dockyard, other cut backs in naval personnel, both uniformed and civilian, were bound to have a disproportionate effect upon the Portsmouth area.

The June 1981 Defence White Paper made real a threat that had been hanging over the Portsmouth labour market since the end of the Second World War. Despite the diversification of the local economy that had taken place in the postwar era, the Dockyard remained the largest industrial complex in the area. In total, the various naval shore establishments in the area employed some 40,000 people, 22,000 civilians and 18,000 uniformed personnel.⁽¹⁷⁾ Moreover, in the context of recession, the naval reductions being proposed were likely to have a multiplier effect throughout the local economy.⁽¹⁸⁾ Thus, although in recent years Portsmouth had been slightly favoured against the national average for unemployment, the immediate prospects for the area seemed particularly bleak at the time that this research was embarked upon. A large number of men, many with highly specialised traditional skills of little application outside the Dockyard,⁽¹⁹⁾ were to be released into the local labour market over a period of two years. At the same time, the most important source of apprenticeships for local young people was to disappear.

However, during the period in which this local case study was being carried out, there was an important change in this situation. In the wake of the Falklands War, the Government produced a new Defence White Paper which was published in December 1982. This cancelled many of the naval reductions proposed by the previous White Paper, and gave a partial reprieve to Portsmouth Dockyard. 1,500 additional jobs were to be retained in the Dockyard as a result.⁽²⁰⁾ This still meant that 4,500 jobs were to be lost, but the blow had been softened, and the task of restructuring and regenerating the local economy no longer appeared to be so immense.

However, the local rate of unemployment was not only dependent upon factors affecting the level of demand within local labour market. The supply-side must also be considered. The population living within the Portsmouth TWA, when last surveyed in 1981, was just over half a million.⁽²¹⁾ This was approximately the same as it had been at the 1971 Census. Yet, over the same ten year period, there had been a 7% increase in the number of people either in employment or seeking employment. Thus, the 1981 Census classified 251,000 people, or just under half the resident

population within the Portsmouth TWA, as 'economically active'. The main factor responsible for this increase in the economic activity rate of the population as a whole was the increase in the activity rate of married women.⁽²²⁾ However, another important factor was the increase in the proportion of the population that were of working age.

Between 1961 and 1971 the proportion of the population within the Portsmouth TWA that was of working age increased from 58.9 per cent to 60.5 per cent. This increase took place despite the raising of the minimum school leaving age from 15 to 16 in 1973. It was largely the result of a substantial increase in the annual total of young people reaching the age of 16. This in turn was a result of the high birth rates that were experienced during the early 1960s. The so-called 'baby-boom' was a national phenomenon; however, its effects in the Portsmouth TWA were probably exaggerated by the large number of young families that moved into the area during that period.⁽²³⁾ Its impact can be gauged by the fact that there were more young people in the 16-19 age group living in the TWA in 1981 than there had been in the 15-19 age group in 1971. What is more, the economic activity rate of the 1981 grouping was higher than that of the 1971 grouping. Thus there were approximately 9 per cent more economically active 16-19 year olds in 1981 than there had been economically active 15-19 year olds in 1971.⁽²⁴⁾

This large increase in the annual number of young people entering the labour market is of course an important factor to be considered in relation to the rising trend of youth unemployment and the special measures that have been implemented in response. Table 13 provides a detailed analysis of the numbers and destinations of young people reaching the minimum school leaving age in the Portsmouth TWA between 1976 and 1982. The figures are based on a 10 per cent annual survey of state schools.⁽²⁵⁾

The first point that should be noted is the demographic trend in the total numbers reaching the minimum school leaving age each year. The final column expresses this trend in terms of an index on which the 1976 total is given the value of 100. From this it can be seen that

TABLE 13. DESTINATIONS OF THOSE REACHING THE MINIMUM SCHOOL LEAVING AGE IN THE PORTSMOUTH TRAVEL-TO-WORK AREA 1976-1982 (STATE SCHOOLS ONLY)

	STAYING ON AT SCHOOL		FURTHER EDUCATION		EMPLOYMENT		UNKNOWN		TOTAL	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1976	1480	24	800	13	3350	54	550	9	6180	100
1977	1840	26	900	13	3930	55	410	6	7080	115
1978	1680	24	1070	15	4070	57	280	4	7100	115
1979	1750	23	730	10	4430	60	500	7	7410	120
1980	1730	25	700	10	4170	60	360	5	6960	113
1981	2090	28	1180	15	3930	52	370	5	7570	122
1982	2220	29	1260	17	3420	45	670	9	7570	122

between 1976 and 1981 there was a 22 per cent increase in the annual total of those reaching the age of 16. This was a fairly steady rise, except for a dip in 1980. Then, between 1981 and 1982, the figure levelled off with these two years being expected to mark the peak of the rise.

The category of 'employment' refers to all those going out into the labour market, whether they succeeded in finding employment or not. If the years of 1976 and 1982 are compared (in which it will be noted that the percentage of 'unknowns' is the same), it will be seen that despite the 22 per cent rise in the numbers reaching school leaving age, there was only a very slight rise in the number of those leaving to seek employment. As a percentage of the total reaching the age of 16, the figure declined from 54 per cent to 45 per cent. Over the same seven year period, the percentage of those opting to stay on at school or go into further education rose from 37 per cent to 46 per cent.

At first sight, these figures would appear to run contrary to the rise in economic activity rates amongst young people that was identified from the comparison of 1971 and 1981 Census results. However, if the years between 1976 and 1982 are examined more closely, it will be seen that the trend towards staying on in the educational system only took hold after 1980. Indeed, between 1976 and 1980, there was an upward trend in the percentage of 16 year olds leaving at the first opportunity to seek employment. Between 1976 and 1979 the figure rose from 54 per cent to 60 per cent, and in 1980 it remained at 60 per cent. These figures support the conclusions that were drawn from the Census results. It was only after the April 1981 Census, with the school leavers of 1981 and 1982, that the dramatic reversal of this trend took place. In this connection it should be noted, when the figures are given below, that it was in the summer of 1980 that youth unemployment and YOP participation in the Portsmouth TWA really took off.⁽²⁶⁾ It would seem likely, therefore, that the significant increases in the percentages of 16 year olds staying on within the educational system in 1981 and 1982 were a reaction to this sharp deterioration of prospects in the youth labour market. This illustrates the point that there is a complex inter-relationship, rather than a simple one-way causal connection, between rates of economic activity and unemployment.

Of school leavers going out into the labour market, by 1982 only about a third were finding employment. Table 14 illustrates this point and provides a simple industrial analysis of the kinds of jobs being entered.⁽²⁷⁾ At the same time, some indication is given of whether any training is involved with these jobs. It will be noted that Manufacturing Industry accounted for almost a third of the jobs being entered, and that the next most important categories were Distributive Industry (6.6%) and Professional, Scientific and Others (5.7%). In total, some 17 per cent of the jobs were apprenticeships or involved some form of professional training. However, such figures for one particular year are of limited use unless they can be set in the context of trends identified from similar figures over a number of previous years. Unfortunately, there was no such series of figures available for South East Hampshire on its own, only for Hampshire as a whole. Nevertheless, these figures can give some idea of the recent trends in young people's employment in the locality.

Table 15 shows the equivalent figures for school leavers throughout Hampshire in 1982 as percentages of the same figures in 1977.⁽²⁸⁾ First, it should be noted that the total number of school leavers entering employment during 1982 was only 40 per cent of what it had been six years earlier. The percentage reductions for each of the industrial categories varied considerably on either side of this average. Worst affected appear to have been Gas, Electricity and Water (29%), Public Administration and Defence (30%), and Manufacturing Industry (34%). Perhaps surprisingly, by far the most resilient category of employment seems to have been Construction (65%). As far as apprenticeships and jobs involving professional training were concerned, these appear to have been reduced by a slightly greater proportion than the level of employment in general. Finally, the other side of these trends should be noted, the massive rises in school leaver unemployment (294%) and YOP participation (564%).⁽²⁹⁾ These require more detailed examination.

TABLE 14

INDUSTRIAL ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYMENT KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN ENTERED BY
SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LEAVERS DURING YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1982

SOUTH EAST HAMPSHIRE
DIVISION

[illegible]

TABLE 15

HAMPSHIRE SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LEAVERS, 1982 ENTRANTS TO EMPLOYMENT
AS A PERCENTAGE OF 1977 ENTRANTS

1. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Mining	45%	
2. Manufacturing Industry	34%	
3. Construction	64%	
4. Gas, Electricity and Water	29%	
5. Communication		} 42%
6. Distributive Industry		
7. Insurance, Banking and Finance		
8. Professional, Scientific and Others	42%	
9. Public Administration and Defence	30%	
10. Total Number of School leavers known to have entered employment	40%	*(37% Apprenticeships or Professional Training)
11. No. of School leavers still unemployed	294%	
12. No. of School leavers estimated to be engaged on the Youth Opportunities Programme	564%	
13. No. of School leavers known to have left school for employment, but about whom there is no information	44%	
14. Total estimated no. of school leavers estimated as having left school for employment	91%	

4. Youth unemployment, special measures, and the development of YOP in South East Hampshire

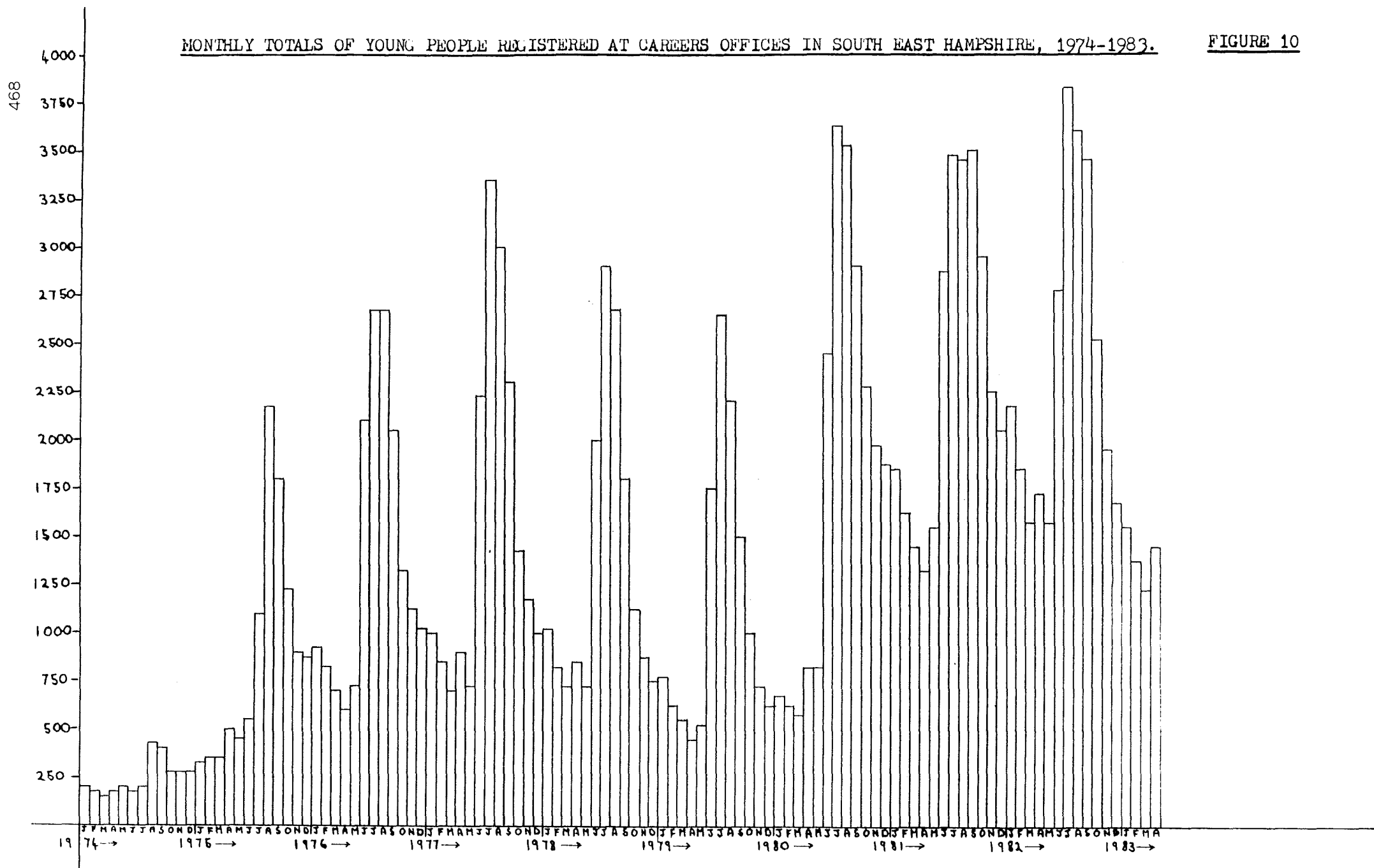
The main statistical information concerning the numerical growth of youth unemployment and special measures provision in the Portsmouth TWA has been summarised in the form of three graphs. The first of these, Figure 10, records the monthly totals of young people registered as unemployed within the South East Division of the Hampshire Careers Service between January 1974 and April 1983.⁽³⁰⁾ It should be noted that these totals do not include those young people in the 16-19 age group who registered at Employment Offices rather than Careers Offices. The numbers in this category were quite large, but most of them were 18 or 19 year olds or those who had already had experience of employment.⁽³¹⁾ Thus the Careers Service totals, which were made up mainly of 16 and 17 year old school leavers, probably give a more accurate impression of the growth of YOP's potential client group. Moreover, the availability of individual monthly totals allows the annual cycle of youth unemployment based round the summer school leaving date to be clearly observed.

Figure 11 provides a quarterly record of the monthly totals of young people participating in YOP and its various special measure predecessors in Hampshire between January 1976 and April 1983.⁽³²⁾ Unfortunately there was no regular set of figures available for South East Hampshire before August 1980. However, the figures that were available subsequently are recorded on the graph, and, on the basis of these figures and the occasional figure that exists before 1980, estimates for South East Hampshire are projected back to 1976.

The third graph, Figure 12, provides a combined picture of the growth of youth unemployment and special measures within the Portsmouth TWA for the quarterly months between January 1976 and April 1983. On this occasion, the youth unemployment figures include both the totals of young people registered at Careers Offices in South East Hampshire and the totals of 16-19 year olds registered at Employment Offices in the Portsmouth TWA.⁽³³⁾ The estimates for YOP and special measures provision in South East Hampshire before August 1980 are transferred from Figure 11. The text that follows provides a brief commentary on the information

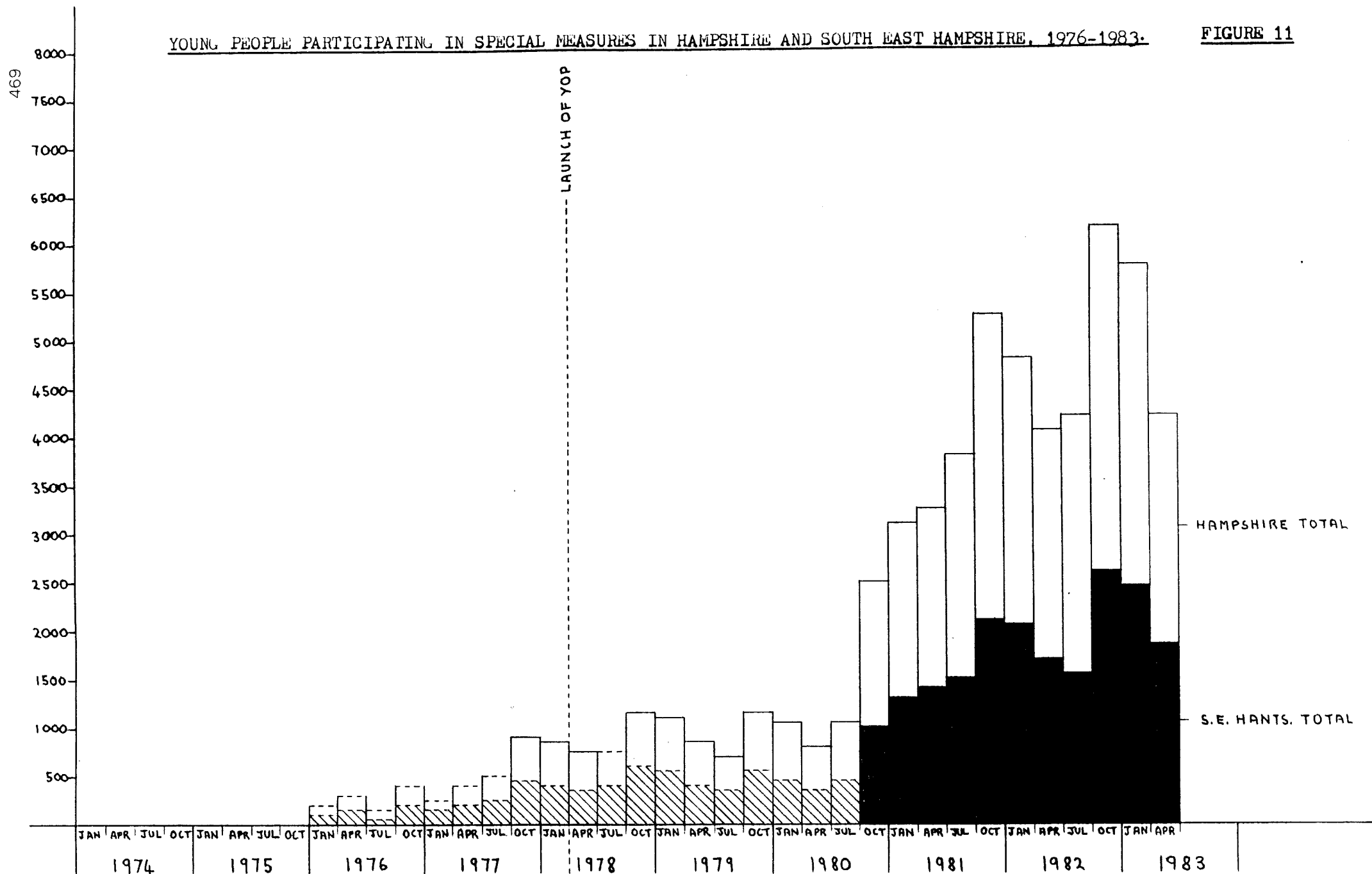
MONTHLY TOTALS OF YOUNG PEOPLE REGISTERED AT CAREERS OFFICES IN SOUTH EAST HAMPSHIRE, 1974-1983.

FIGURE 10



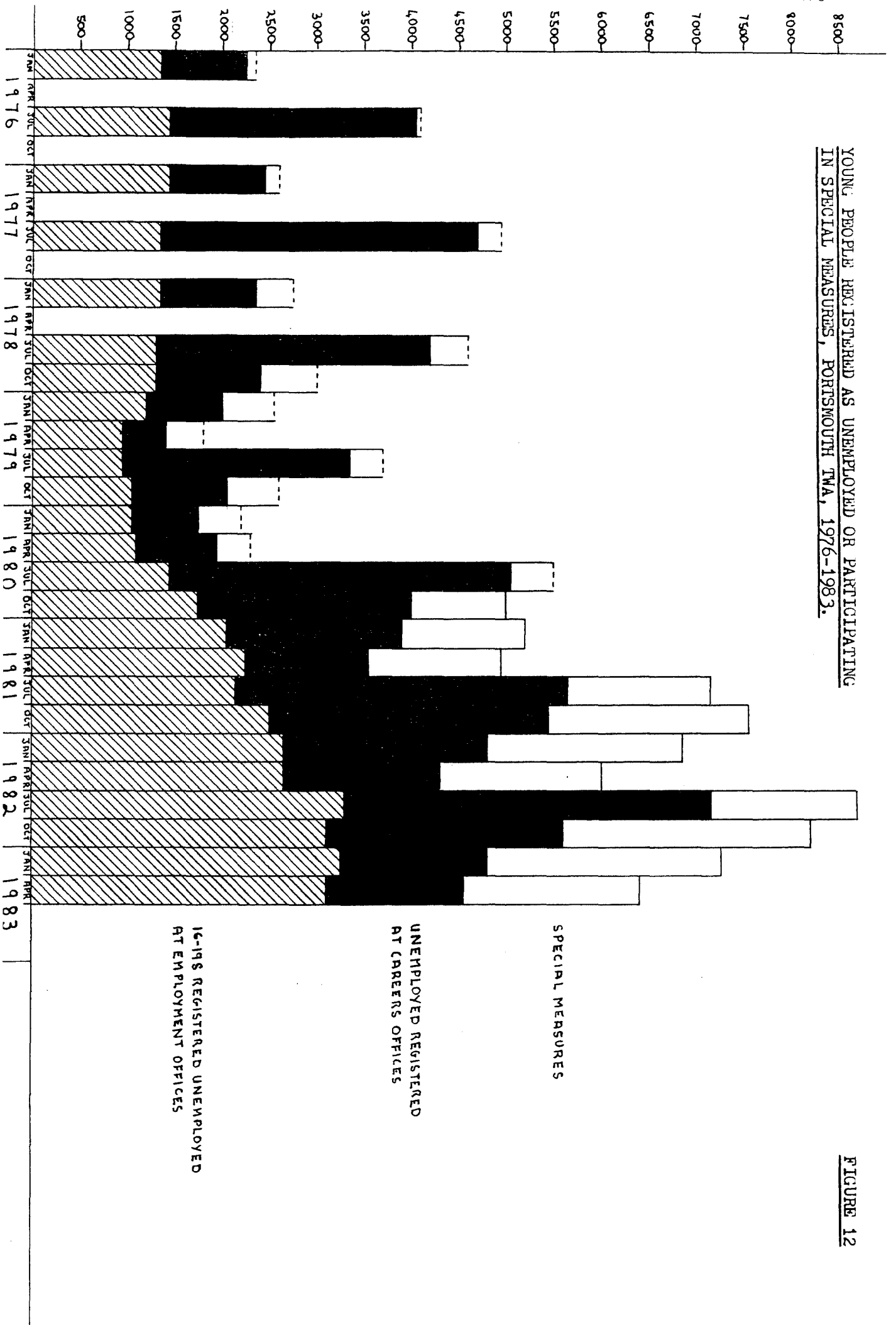
YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN SPECIAL MEASURES IN HAMPSHIRE AND SOUTH EAST HAMPSHIRE, 1976-1983.

FIGURE 11



YOUNG PEOPLE REGISTERED AS UNEMPLOYED OR PARTICIPATING
IN SPECIAL MEASURES, PORTSMOUTH TWA, 1976-1983.

FIGURE 12



that is summarised by the three graphs, and gives further details of the local development of YOP and its special measure predecessors.

A County Careers Service Report described 1974 as "the last full year of what was known as 'full employment' in Hampshire." (34) In January of that year (the month in which the MSC came into existence), there were 424 young people registered as unemployed at Careers Offices throughout the county: 201 of these were located at offices within South East Hampshire. Even with the impact of school leavers in the summer, the highest monthly total of the year for the South East Division was only just over 400. At the beginning of 1975, however, the figures began to climb, and allowing for the pattern of seasonal variation they rose continuously until reaching a peak of some 3,350 in the summer of 1977.

Special measures in response to youth unemployment were first introduced in Hampshire towards the end of 1975. Originally, they consisted of roughly a hundred places on short courses and a mere handful of jobs sponsored under the Job Creation Programme. As unemployment continued to rise during 1976 and 1977, there was a steady build-up of the level of special measures provision throughout the county. The short courses, most of which were 13 week 'Industrial Appreciation Courses' organised by the TSA at local F E colleges, increased their capacity to almost 350 places by the autumn term of 1977. Meanwhile, JCP expanded to reach a maximum level of some 70 places, most of which were sponsored by the Hampshire County Council. The schemes included a library service for the housebound, the restoration of a canal, and the provision of facilities for parks and nature reserves. Further additions to the range of provision in the area were provided by the introduction of Community Industry and the Work Experience Programme. The South Hampshire Unit of Community Industry was established in April 1976, initially offering some 30 places and subsequently expanding to more than 80. WEP was introduced later during the same year, and likewise started on a small scale with only some 40 places available throughout the county. However, during 1977, the numbers increased rapidly and by March 1978 the total had reached almost 500. Finally, to complete this picture of pre-YOP special measures to relieve youth unemployment, it should be mentioned

that during 1976-1977 some 375 young people were employed in Hampshire under the Youth Employment Subsidy. (35)

The Youth Opportunities Programme, it will be remembered was launched nationally in April 1978. Its immediate impact in Hampshire does not appear to have been particularly dramatic. A Local Area Board was set up covering Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and generally administrative arrangements were put on a better co-ordinated and more permanent basis. Existing schemes changed their names and the steady growth of new schemes continued. But there was no major change in either the scale or the composition of provision to mark the introduction of the new programme. The most significant growth in scale during this early stage of development had already taken place with the expansion of WEEP in response to the large numbers of unemployed school leavers in the summer of 1977. Moreover, this had also set the trend for the future development of the composition of provision, with the Work Experience on Employers Premises element predominating over the training courses and other forms of work experience.

The launching of YOP co-incided with the start of a period of respite in the growth of youth unemployment. In South East Hampshire, as in the rest of the county, the 1978 summer peak for the total of those registered at Careers Offices did not reach the same level that it had the year previously. This improvement continued through into 1979 when the summer peak came back down to the level of that in 1976. Such figures gave the impression that YOP had made an important impact on local youth unemployment. However, although YOP may have helped, the improvement was largely the result of a general reduction in the level of unemployment affecting all ages, which can be seen from Figure 8 to have taken place both in the Portsmouth TWA and nationally during 1978 and 1979. Indeed, during this period, the growth of the numbers participating in YOP throughout the county came to a halt. Allowing for the characteristic pattern of seasonal variation, the quarterly month figures for YOP participation in Hampshire remained virtually static between October 1978 and 1980. (36)

As was the case nationally, it was in the summer of 1980 that the local youth unemployment figures began to take off again. By July 1980 there

were over 3,600 young people registering as unemployed at Careers Offices in South East Hampshire, a figure clearly surpassing the previous peak of July 1977, despite the build-up of YOP provision which had taken place in the meantime. The response of the local Programme reflected the gravity of the situation. Between July and October 1980, the number of young people participating in YOP throughout Hampshire more than doubled. Moreover, the figures available for those on YOP in South East Hampshire show that the October total in this single division of the county was very nearly as high as the total for the whole of the county had been in July, and higher than it had been in April.

Despite this massive increase of YOP provision, the youth unemployment figures during the latter quarter of 1980 failed to come back down to the levels of previous years. Thus the figure for those registered as unemployed at Careers Offices in South East Hampshire stood at 1,841 in January 1981, 80 per cent above the previous highest for this month in 1978. The summer peak that followed was slightly below that of 1980, but the figures came down even slower than the year before, leaving a total of 2,174 still unemployed in January 1982.

Meanwhile, the growth of YOP provision continued to chase the unemployment statistics upwards. Between October 1980 and October 1981, the numbers participating in the Programme increased at every quarter, ignoring the previous pattern of seasonal variation. Over this period of a year, the totals for Hampshire and South East Hampshire both more than doubled, the South East Division maintaining approximately a 40 per cent share of provision throughout the county. The pattern of seasonal variation resumed in 1982, but the summer of that year saw record figures for both youth unemployment and YOP participation. In July 1982, there were over 3,800 young people registered with Careers Offices in South East Hampshire, and, by October, there were over 6,000 on YOP throughout Hampshire and over 2,500 in the South East Division. These figures represented a 32 per cent increase in youth unemployment and a five fold increase in YOP provision since the first summer of the programme in 1978.

Some description has already been given of the composition of special measures provision throughout Hampshire before the introduction of YOP. Table 16 provides an analysis of the changing composition of local YOP/special measures provision based on annual monthly figures for participation between October 1977 and October 1982. The month of October was chosen for this purpose because at that time of year all the different scheme types tended to be running at near maximum capacity dealing with the inflow of summer school leavers.⁽³⁷⁾ Once again, the figures for South East Hampshire are only available from August 1980. In general, it will be seen that they match closely those for the county as a whole.⁽³⁸⁾

The most important trend over the first five years was the growth of the Work Experience on Employers' Premises element in relation to the other types of provision. As we have already seen, this trend was started by the expansion of the Work Experience Programme in 1977, before the introduction of YOP. Nevertheless, it would appear that at the beginning of YOP there was a smaller proportion of WEEP provision locally than was the case nationally.⁽³⁹⁾ Conversely, the proportion of places provided by the various kinds of training courses seems to have been higher than at the national level. However, as the scale of the local programme as a whole expanded, the size of this latter sector of provision remained virtually static, while the vast majority of the new places were provided on WEEP schemes. As a result, by October 1981 the WEEP sector appears to have become even more predominant within the local programme than it was nationally.⁽⁴⁰⁾

The major change which took place during the final year was the emergence of the New Training Places. The first of these were introduced in June 1982, and by October there were over 700 occupied places in the South East Hampshire Division. This represented almost 30 per cent of the total provision in the area, which was well above the national average and roughly in line with the original target of 100,000 places being available throughout the country by September 1982. The majority of these New Training Places were improved and extended versions of previous schemes and courses. Thus the Training Workshop, which had been established in Portsmouth back in September 1980, no longer appears

TABLE 16

COMPOSITION OF YOP / SPECIAL MEASURES PROVISION IN HAMPSHIRE AND SOUTH EAST
HAMPSHIRE, 1977 - 1982

SCHEME / COURSE TYPE	AREA	OCT 1977	OCT 1978	OCT 1979	OCT 1980	OCT 1981	OCT 1982
WORK EXPERIENCE ON EMPLOYERS' PREMISES / WEP	HAMPSHIRE S.E.HANTS	44%	56%	60%	68% 66%	75% 74%	56% 54%
COMMUNITY PROJECTS / CS, PBWE, JCP	HAMPSHIRE S.E.HANTS	13%	5%	6%	7% 4%	9% 8%	6% 5%
TRAINING WORKSHOP	HAMPSHIRE S.E.HANTS	-	-	-	2% 4%	1% 2%	- -
COMMUNITY INDUSTRY	HAMPSHIRE S.E.HANTS	7%	6%	7%	5% 9%	2% 3%	2% 3%
WORK PREPARATION COURSES / IACs, SICs, STCs, WICs	HAMPSHIRE S.E.HANTS	36%	33%	27%	18% 17%	13% 13%	9% 10%
NEW TRAINING PLACES	HAMPSHIRE S.E.HANTS	-	-	-	- -	- -	27% 28%
TOTALS	HAMPSHIRE S.E.HANTS	910	1140	1144	2476 1019	5252 2121	6145 2583

separately in the statistics because by now it was upgraded to provide some 130 NTPs. Likewise, a number of the larger Community Projects had been raised in status in order to contribute over 100 further places to this new category. However, a completely new form of provision was the prestigious Information Technology Centre, which was located in the Portsmouth Civic Offices and initially provided some 30 places. The remainder of the NTPs were accounted for by the 12 month Work Skills Courses, the vast majority of which were upgraded and extended versions of previous college-based courses. (41)

As was the case at the national level, it would appear from these local statistics that an important change took place in the nature of YOP during its final year. However, this account has already provided certain indications that nominal changes did not necessarily correspond with real changes. Certainly the introduction of NTPs had an impact on the local statistics, but what difference did it make at the level of individual schemes and courses? This was one of the questions to be considered during the second phase of this local case study, the programme of visits and interviews. However, before this is presented, it is necessary to mention briefly two further aspects of the quantitative performance of YOP in the local area, the undertakings and the employment rates of the trainees.

Complete statistical records relating to the fulfilment of the undertakings at the local level were not available. However, there was sufficient information to enable certain comparisons to be made with the national level results. During the first two years of the school leaver undertaking, the Easter deadline appears to have been met throughout Hampshire without much difficulty. (42) In the third year with youth unemployment taking off, it was not so easy. In the South East Division, some 50 young people were left without their promised offer of a place. Nevertheless, this was still well below the national average, given the scale of local provision. However, when in the fourth year the deadline was brought forward to Christmas, the total of failures in the South East rose to a figure of almost 200, which represented slightly more than the national average. This though was the exception, and in the final year the total was reduced to less than 20, representing a mere fraction of the average failure rate throughout the country. (43)

As was the case nationally, results for the other two undertakings were difficult to obtain. However, it would appear that during the period when the undertaking to the long-term unemployed was in force, this category of youth unemployment was not really a problem in Hampshire. When the undertaking started in January 1980, there were only about 50 young people who had been unemployed for more than a year in the whole of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Two of these still remained without the offer of a place three months later. (44) No other results were available locally, but it should be noted that when the undertaking came to an end in March 1981 there were still less than 50 young people who had been registered as unemployed with the Hampshire Careers Services for more than a year. Likewise, the fulfilment of the undertaking to the other 16 and 17 year olds appears to have been considerably easier in Hampshire than in certain other areas of the country. The results available for the six month periods ending in April and October 1982 both showed less than 30 young people left without the offer of a place throughout Hampshire, and less than 10 within the South East Division. (45)

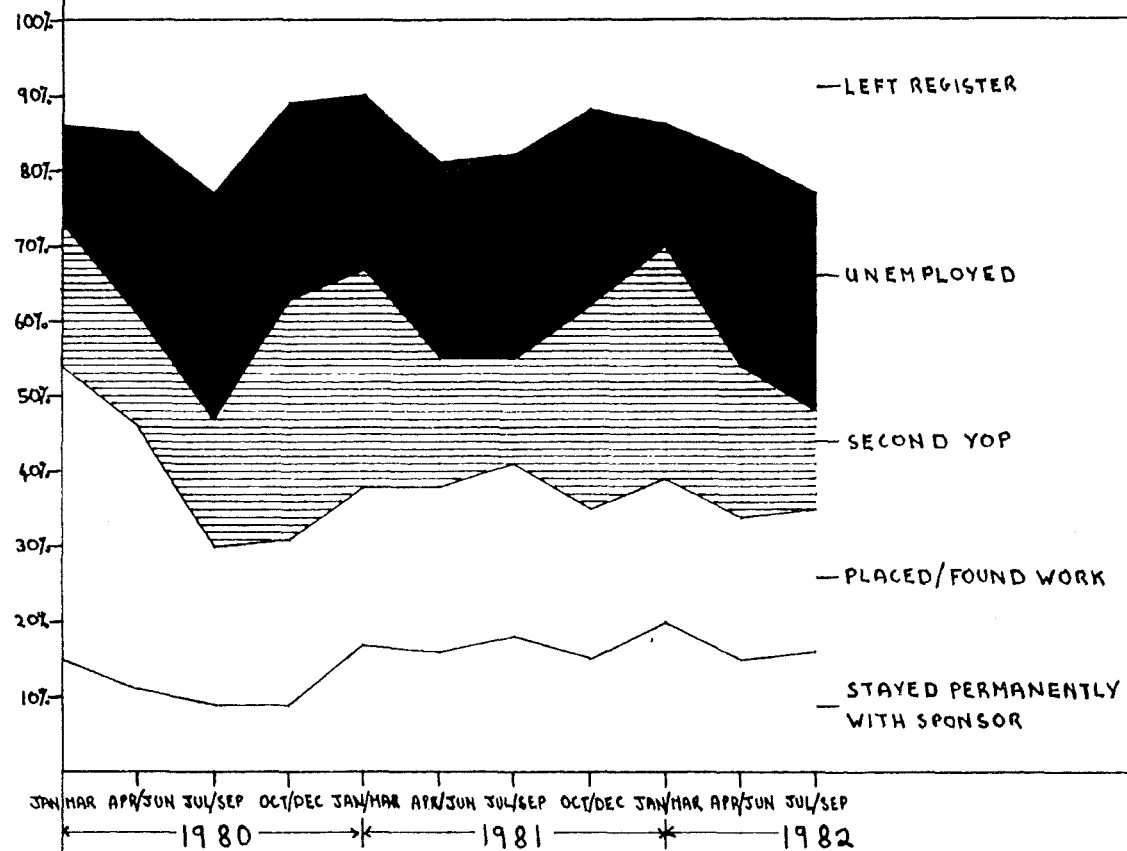
Thus, in general, it would appear that locally YOP was considerably more successful at meeting the various undertakings than it was in average throughout the country. This was particularly so in the case of the two undertakings to the longer term young unemployed, suggesting that the high failure rates of these undertakings were not evenly distributed in relation to overall levels of unemployment, but were concentrated in the particular unemployment blackspots. The only major exception to the relative success of the local area was the fourth year of the school leavers undertaking. This can probably be explained by the fact that until this year the local programme had not been put under the same pressure as that faced in many other areas of the country. As a result, there was perhaps greater reluctance to classify as refusers those young people for whom it was difficult to provide. Moreover, the bringing forward of the deadline to Christmas caused a certain amount of resentment within the Careers Service. It was felt that the local autonomy and professional responsibility of the Service was being undermined, and that increasingly it was being forced to order its priorities around guarantees imposed arbitrarily by the Government and the MSC. (46) By attempting to maintain open access to YOP for youngsters outside the

main undertaking groups, the Hampshire Careers Service made the job of fulfilling the undertakings that much more difficult for itself.

Finally, in relation to employability, Figure 13 summarises the destinations of young people leaving YOP schemes and courses in South East Hampshire between January 1980 and September 1982.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, these figures can only be compared in a vague and tentative manner with the national results that were set out in Chapter 5.⁽⁴⁸⁾ It will be remembered that, between January 1980 and September 1982, the average employment rate of trainees leaving all forms of schemes and courses within the national programme was 42%, and that the average unemployment rate was 40%. Over the same period, the average employment rate in South East Hampshire was 38%, and the average unemployment rate 24%. Both of these figures are smaller than was the case nationally because there was a much larger miscellaneous category for those who left the Careers Service register and whose destination was unknown. Amongst those whose destination was known, the local employment placement rate was at least as good as the national average and the local unemployment rate considerably better (i.e., lower). No firm conclusions can be drawn, but it would seem from the evidence available that the achievement of the local programme in relation to this criterion was, as generally so with the undertakings, average or above average. Certainly, in relation to the national picture, the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area was by no means a blackspot as far as the statistical performance of YOP was concerned.

ANALYSIS OF THE DESTINATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE COMPLETING
YOP IN SOUTH EAST HAMPSHIRE, JANUARY 1980 - SEPTEMBER 1982.

FIGURE 13



II THE LOCAL PROGRAMME

The second phase of the local case study consisted, principally, of a series of visits to a sample of the YOP schemes and courses being provided within the Portsmouth area. The broad objective was to establish how the detailed operation of the Programme at the level of individual schemes and courses within a specific local labour market related to the stated aims and objectives of the Programme as defined at the national level of policy-making. The visits were carried out in February/March 1983, at the end of the final year of the Programme, when it was already in the process of transition towards the new Youth Training Scheme. The sample was selected in order to cover the full range of provision available within the area, and to reflect the relative numerical importance of the different types of schemes and courses. Twenty-one visits were carried out in all, distributed as follows: nine to WEEP schemes, three to Community Projects, one each to the Training Workshop, the Information Technology Centre and the Community Industry Unit, three to Colleges providing YOP courses, and three to other providers of YOP courses. During the course of these visits, I interviewed people at both managerial and supervisory levels, and I spoke informally with some of the trainees. The information that I obtained is presented below. The bulk of it is organised into three broad categories: (A) WEEP schemes; (B) other schemes and projects; (C) training courses. These correspond respectively with Mode A, Mode B1 and Mode B2 within the subsequent organisation of provision under the Youth Training Scheme. Finally, there is a separate section (D) which is concerned specifically with the provision of off-the-job training across all three of these sectors.

A WEEP Schemes

We have already seen that, in numerical terms, WEEP was always by far the most important type of YOP provision within both Hampshire and South East Hampshire. It never constituted less than half of the total number of places occupied and, in the fourth year of the Programme, it amounted to almost three-quarters. With the introduction of a large number of New Training Places in the final year of the Programme, the proportion of WEEP was sharply reduced, but it still constituted the majority element of the Programme.

In December 1982 there were over 2,600 places available on WEEP schemes in South East Hampshire. However, only half of these were filled. This low occupancy rate can be explained partially by the fact that by this stage the WEEP sector was being allowed to run down in preparation for the introduction of YTS. However, another important factor was that of occupational mismatch. Table 17 provides an analysis of the distribution according to 'Occupational Training Families' of the 2,600 WEEP places available in December 1982.⁽⁴⁹⁾ What should be noted is that 2 of the 11 O.T.F.s, 'Administrative, Clerical and Office Services' and 'Personal Services and Sales Occupations', accounted for 50 per cent of the total number of places available. The local MSC was always able to find plenty of shops and offices that were ready to act as sponsors for work experience placements. However, there was only a certain proportion of those registered unemployed with the Careers Service for whom such opportunities were suitable. Many lacked either the aptitude or the inclination for clerical or retail employment, but were keen to gain experience of practical manual work in the construction and manufacturing industries. The problem was, that in these industries, it was far more difficult to find the number of work experience placements which were required to meet the demand. Thus the Careers Service and the MSC sometimes found themselves in the embarrassing position of having, simultaneously, large numbers of unoccupied places for which they could not find suitable young people, and large numbers of eligible unemployed young people for whom they could not find suitable placements. This led to complaints of mismanagement in the local press, and one of the local Conservative MPs went as far as

TABLE 17 OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF WEEP PLACES - BOTH FILLED AND UNFILLED - IN SOUTH EAST HAMPSHIRE : DECEMBER 1982.

INSTITUTE OF MANPOWER STUDIES OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING FAMILIES	WEEP PLACES FILLED AND UNFILLED	
1. Administrative Clerical & Office Services Occupations.	588	22%
2. Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry & Fisheries Occupations.	158	6%
3. Construction and Extractive Occupations.	236	9%
4. Craft and Design Occupations.	75	3%
5. Electronic, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Occupations. (A) Manufacturing and Assembly (B) Installation, Maintenance and Repair	144 216	6% 8%
6. Food Preparation and Service Occupations.	164	6%
7. General Manufacturing and Processing Occupations.	85	3%
8. Personal Services and Sales Occupations.	730	28%
9. Community and Health Service Occupations.	61	2%
10. Technical and Scientific Occupations	74	3%
11. Transport Services Occupations (including Warehousing).	85	3%
TOTAL	2,616	100%

accusing the young unemployed of being "bone idle" because they were not prepared to "get on their bikes" to take up YOP "jobs". (50)

The distribution of WEEP schemes needs also to be considered in relation to the structure of the local labour market, and in particular to the job prospects of local young people. Table 12 of the previous section provided an industrial analysis of employment in the Portsmouth TWA, and Tables 13 and 14 gave further such analyses of the entry into employment of school and college leavers in Hampshire and South East Hampshire. Unfortunately, however, these industrial analyses cannot be directly related to the occupational analysis of WEEP places in terms of OTFs that has been presented here. Moreover, as yet, there was no analysis available of the local labour market that could be presented in terms of OTFs. Thus, comparisons between the distribution of WEEP places and the distribution of jobs in the local labour market can only be made in a generalised way. In total, 64% of the WEEP places available were in service occupations. This compares with 58% of employees in service industries within the Portsmouth TWA in 1977. However, if it is assumed that individual industries within the TWA developed subsequently in the same way as they did nationally, then it could be expected that by December 1982 the percentage of employees in service industries was almost identical to the percentage of WEEP places offered in service occupations. Yet, if the statistics for the entry of school leavers into employment are referred to again, it will be seen that in 1982 still only some 55% of young people in South East Hampshire were finding their first jobs in service industries. Furthermore, between 1977 and 1982, the number of school leavers entering these industries throughout Hampshire had declined by as great a percentage as the total entering all forms of employment. Thus, while at a very general level the distribution of WEEP places appears to have corresponded closely with the structure of the local labour market as a whole, reflecting the trend towards a greater proportion of service employment; its correspondence with the pattern of young people's entry into employment, where the trend towards service industries appeared to be absent, was by no means so exact. The possible significance of this somewhat paradoxical situation is considered in Chapter 6 of the main text.

Another feature which should be noted about the WEEP sector in South East Hampshire concerns the size of the schemes. On average there were 1.3 trainees per individual scheme. Thus, most trainees were on their own in a single placement with a small employer. One reason for this, and indeed for the occupational distribution of placements that is described above, was the influence of the trade unions. Their organisation tended to be strongest in the larger well-established concerns in the traditional local manufacturing industries. At the same time, it was in this sector of local industry that the largest concentrations of redundancies were being experienced. It is not surprising, then, that the unions concerned often blocked the introduction of work experience schemes into these areas of employment. One notable example was the Naval Dockyard. At one time it had a scheme catering for 25 trainees, but as soon as redundancies were announced the unions demanded that it should be discontinued. Amongst smaller employers and throughout the clerical and retail sectors, union organisation tended to be weaker, and in many cases was non-existent. Naturally, the distribution of schemes tended to be biased towards those areas where the potential for union resistance was weakest. The majority of schemes in the area were in non-unionised workplaces.

Of the 21 visits that I made to schemes and courses in the Portsmouth area, nine were devoted to a survey of WEEP schemes. Originally I asked the local MSC office for a list of 10 WEEP sponsors that I could visit. I specified that they should include a representative range in terms of both size and type of business. I received a list of 14 employers, all of which I attempted to make contact with. Of these, two I was unable to contact and three declined to be interviewed, leaving nine with which I successfully arranged and completed interviews. For the purpose of these interviews I made out a standard questionnaire form which I filled in during each interview, using it as an open-ended structure. A copy of this questionnaire is reproduced below.⁽⁵¹⁾ As well as carrying out interviews with the sponsors, I made use of any opportunity that I could to speak to the trainees. I also obtained further information by accompanying an

MSC link officer during an afternoon of monitoring visits on a Group WEEP scheme.

It must be stressed from the outset that the results of such a survey can only be taken as illustrative of certain features that have arisen on this type of scheme, and cannot be considered as definitive of all WEEP schemes in the area. I have no reason to believe that the list given to me by the MSC was unrepresentative, however, I do suspect that it was the higher quality sponsors who were most ready to be interviewed. The results are set out in accordance with the structure of the questionnaire.

1. Background

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to collect certain background information about the employer and the scheme that they were sponsoring. The results should help to convey some idea of the range and representation of the survey.

a) Employers

Of the nine employers that I interviewed, there was one large nationalised industry, one large retail chain store, a local charitable organisation, a printer, a wholesale distributor, a catering butcher, a tyre-fitter, a travel agency and a small fishing tackle shop.

The first two of these firms each employed more than 50 people at the worksite that I visited. Of the others, three employed between 10 and 50 people, two employed between five and 10, and two employed less than five. Of the nine, three had increased the numbers of their permanent staff during the time that they had been YOP sponsors, three had decreased the number, and three had remained static. However, six of the nine sponsors thought that employment prospects were poor in their type of business.

At six of the nine workplaces there was no union presence, one had a closed shop arrangement, one had some employees in a union, and one employer did not know, but thought that some of his staff might be in a union.

b) Schemes

Most of the sponsors had joined YOP between 18 and 30 months ago, though two had only become sponsors during the last year and one had been a sponsor over the last four years.

Most had been directly approached by the local MSC, though the larger firms with national head offices had generally been informed of the Programme via their head office. The information that they received about becoming a sponsor took the form of a standard MSC booklet. (52)

When asked why they had decided to become sponsors, a third of those interviewed acknowledged that it was a form of recruitment strategy. Two said that it was out of concern for the young people, two said that it was a head office decision, and one (the charity) said that there was work that needed doing.

Between them, the nine sponsors offered 27 places. Three offered a single place, three offered two places, one offered three places, one offered four places and one (the charity) offered 11 places. Of the 16 places offered by sponsors other than the charity, six were in retail occupations and five were in clerical work. Since they first joined the Programme, the nine different sponsors had had just over 100 trainees through their schemes.

In the minority of cases where there was a union presence, the unions appear to have had virtually no impact upon the schemes. In the case of the nationalised industry with a closed shop, an agreement had been made at national level and the local union representatives had been informed, but their involvement did not appear to have gone any further.

2. Recruitment and Selection

Sponsors were not allowed to recruit directly for their schemes, but had to rely on the Careers Service (and to a much lesser extent the Job Centre) to send them suitable candidates. They could, however, select from amongst the candidates that they were sent. (53) The MSC handbook gave the following guidance:

"Sponsors should bear in mind that the Youth Opportunities Programme is designed to help particularly the less able less qualified young people. It would be inappropriate to apply the normal selection procedures and conditions used for recruiting permanent employees. When selecting trainees an important question should be 'What is he or she likely to be capable of?' rather than 'What is he or she qualified to do?'. "(54)

I was interested to find out whether sponsors exercised their right to select, and if they did, whether they followed this guidance.

Two out of the nine had been prepared to accept all of the candidates that were sent to them by the Careers Service. Both of these had experienced problems with trainees, and had had a high turnover rate.

All except one of the employers said that they were prepared to accept young people of either sex for the places that they were offering. However, their intake generally conformed to conventional sex roles. This they claimed was a reflection of the candidates that they had been sent, rather than of their own selection policies.

Most of those who selected did so on the basis of subjective factors of personality, attitude and appearance which they claimed to be able to judge. Keenness, common sense and the ability to fit in, were the positive qualities most often mentioned. Only one (the large nationalised company) required certain minimum qualifications, though another (the retail chain store) administered their own simple test. However, the majority said that their selection was the same as it would have been for normal employees.

* * * * *

MSC guidelines for WEEP schemes referred to four main components - induction, planned work experience, training or further education, and counselling. I asked the sponsors how they had gone about providing each of these components.

* * * * *

3. Induction

The MSC guide to potential sponsors stated that for young people to benefit from the scheme they would need to know: exactly what work experience was; an idea of the activities of the organisation they had joined; what they would be doing; attendance requirements and the supervision and support that was to be provided; and safety procedures. (55)

The degree of formality of the induction procedure varied greatly amongst the different sponsors that I interviewed. As might be expected, the larger employers with their own specialist personnel staff provided the most formalised introductions for their trainees. Thus, for example the nationalised industry laid on a one week residential course which covered all of the elements specified by the MSC. Amongst the smaller firms the procedure was less formal and it was sometimes difficult to establish exactly what had taken place. In most cases it seems to have consisted of a brief chat, a tour of the premises, and an introduction to the people that they would be working with. Some sponsors said that they had found the MSC booklets useful and had based what they did on these. Others appeared to have been more lax. Not all of the trainees that I spoke to had been told about health and safety precautions. In some cases the main emphasis seems to have been put upon rules and discipline. The vague promise that "there might be a job in it" was used as an incentive for hard work and good behaviour.

4. Planned Work Experience

This of course was the main component of a WEEP scheme. The MSC guide to sponsors stressed that it was essential that the trainees should be given as wide a range of work as possible. The range that was to be covered was agreed beforehand between the sponsor and the MSC, and was described in the proposal forms. (56)

The range of work experience available varied from scheme to scheme, depending on the nature of the business. In the case of the larger employers the necessary range of experience was achieved by means of a formal system of rotation between a number of quite narrowly

defined areas of work. For example, in the scheme run by the retail chain store, the trainees spent six weeks in each of these four areas: the checkout tills, personal service, shelf-filling, and the office or stock room. Amongst smaller employers, such a formal system of rotation was rarely practical. However, this did not necessarily mean that they could not offer as wide a range of experience. In businesses where there was no rigid technical division of labour and 'everyone mucked in', it was quite possible that a trainee could stay in the same position for the whole six months and gain at least as wide a range of experience as they would from being rotated between numerous different positions in a larger firm. For example, the post of shop assistant in the scheme run by the small fishing tackle shop probably covered a wider range of work experience than the four different posts rotated between in the scheme run by the large retail chain store. It was in the smaller firms with a more rigid technical division of labour that the range of work experience was likely to be most limited. The MSC always tried to maximise the range of activities covered, but sometimes both the sponsors and the trainees were reluctant to be as flexible as the MSC would have liked. Some employers, understandably, were unwilling to put trainees in positions of responsibility where, for example, expensive machinery was involved. Others believed that the trainees would gain more if they stayed in one particular area of work, rather than being forced to move around. This was particularly the case where the work involved a certain level of technical skill. The MSC philosophy of adaptability and skill transfer was not always appreciated, especially by those whose own background was as skilled craftsmen. This was a view shared by some trainees. They tended to identify with the area of work in which they were first placed, and were unwilling to be moved on.

The training content directly associated with the work experience varied in a similar way. With the larger employers the training content was integrated into the formalised system of rotation, so that the trainees could be given some introductory training for the work that they would be doing at the beginning of each new section. With the smaller employers, the organisation was again less formal, and the actual amount of training given varied greatly. Some small employers were prepared to give their trainees a lot of individual

attention and went out of their way to teach them as many aspects of the job as they could. Thus, for example, the trainee in the small fishing tackle shop learnt not only how to be a sales assistant, but also how to make and repair a variety of items of fishing tackle. Other small employers merely showed their trainees how to do a few simple repetitive tasks and let them get on with it.

The work experience was supposed to be supervised closely, yet at the same time to be realistic. The questions that I asked revealed a certain incompatibility between these two objectives. Most sponsors claimed to supervise their trainees closely, at least initially. As the trainees gained experience, they tended to be given more responsibility. Some sponsors admitted that on certain occasions, such as when other staff were away sick, trainees would be left to work without supervision. It was argued that trainees wanted to be trusted in this way and that they benefitted from being responsible for working on their own. One sponsor's idea of supervision was to 'bug' his trainees through an intercom system while he was away. In general, those who supervised their trainees least tended to regard the work experience that they provided as being most realistic. Four out of the nine sponsors interviewed said that their trainees did not work in any way differently from their normal employees.

5. Off-the-job Training

In addition to any training that trainees might receive directly during their work experience, they had the right to be released by their sponsors for one day per week in order to undertake relevant training or further education. It was not mandatory for trainees to take up this opportunity. Nor was there any obligation upon sponsors to make the necessary arrangements: their only duty was to release the trainees if requested.⁽⁵⁷⁾ The local MSC arranged the provision. The main providers were local colleges, though private training organisations and the sponsors themselves could contribute if they had suitable facilities. The content of the training and further education generally came under the heading of social and life skills, though remedial and vocational education was also included. More will be said specifically about the provision

of off-the-job training in the Portsmouth area in the separate section which is devoted to this subject. The analysis below is restricted to the view obtained from the angle of the WEEP sponsors whom I interviewed. It should, however, be noted at this stage that throughout Hampshire there was provision for only about 10-12% of the total number of work experience trainees.

Of the nine sponsors that I interviewed, two had sent all their trainees on off-the-job training. These were the two larger companies. The nationalised company had made attendance at a BEC General Clerical Studies Course a requirement of its training. The retail chain store had sent all its trainees on a Social and Life Skills Course at a local college. Four other sponsors had had some of their trainees go on Social and Life Skills Courses. None of the trainees from the remaining three sponsors had received any form of off-the-job training at all.

The BEC General Course seems to have fitted in well with the work experience being offered by the nationalised company. Both the sponsor, and one of the trainees that I spoke to, had a good opinion of it. In contrast, all of the sponsors who had released trainees to attend Social and Life Skills Courses had a low opinion of this form of provision. They complained that the courses were badly organised and irrelevant to the needs of the trainees. Some thought that the staff running the courses ('college trendies') had little understanding of the realities of the world of work. Or as one sponsor remarked, "What can an unemployed teacher tell an unemployed school leaver about holding down a job?" The low opinion of Social and Life Skills provision at local colleges was shared by most of the trainees that I spoke to, some of whom had given up attending after a short while. They said that it had been a waste of time, or at best, just a 'skive' from work. Teachers had turned up late, and when they arrived, they did not know what they were doing. They kept talking about what the trainees were going to do, rather than getting on with it. The purpose of the activities that did take place, such as role-playing games and opinion surveys, were not always understood and were often regarded as either ridiculous or irrelevant. When trainees did co-operate in these exercises they were not always followed up or

explained. One trainee told me that his course ended up with the teachers just letting the trainees club together to rent videos like Mad Max 2.

Those sponsors whose trainees had not attended any kind of off-the-job training provision claimed that it was because the trainees were not interested. The main reason given was that it seemed too much like going back to school. Sponsors generally claimed that they informed the trainees of the opportunity that existed and left it up to them to decide whether they took advantage of it. In one case, however, a trainee contradicted what his sponsor had told me. The Careers Service informed the trainee of a course which he thought sounded interesting and wanted to attend. The sponsor, however, told him that the course was rubbish and that he was not to attend. The trainee, of course, had the right to ask for day release and could have complained to the MSC if he was not granted it. However, he was in no position to argue since he was hoping that he might be kept on permanently by the sponsor. The sponsor had told me merely that the trainee was not interested in the course.

6. Counselling

The sponsors were supposed to provide their trainees with support and personal advice when it was required. I asked them how they went about this. As well as the counselling provided by sponsors, it was intended that trainees should have continued access to the Careers Service whilst they were on schemes.⁽⁵⁸⁾ This aspect of counselling, however, is dealt with under the next heading of 'monitoring'.⁽⁵⁹⁾

I found it difficult to establish exactly how the sponsors were interpreting the requirement to provide counselling. The larger schemes, as before, tended to be organised in a more formal manner. The retail chain store and the charity both made arrangements for the trainees to have regular chats with the personnel officer responsible for administering the scheme. In other schemes arrangements appeared to be more vague and informal. Some managers merely said that they were available if the trainee wanted to see them ("my door is always open"), but there was no definite arrange-

ment and they did not really expect the trainee to come to them with any personal problems. In some of the smaller firms, if there was any counselling at all, it existed as an indistinguishable element of day to day working relationships. Moreover, there was a tendency to interpret the principal function of counselling as being that of reinforcing work discipline - "I give him an occasional bollocking to keep him on his toes." Yet, the sponsor who made that remark also described how he had tried to help a trainee with drink and drug problems that were affecting his work. Another sponsor told me that she had been instructed by the MSC to treat the trainees as she would any other new starters. This seemed to be the general rule with regard to counselling, and as such, it sanctioned almost anything, and almost nothing.

7. Monitoring

WEEP schemes were supposed to be monitored on a regular basis by MSC staff. Visits were generally carried out by Area Link Officers in the Special Programmes Division (until it was merged into the Training Division in December 1982). The main purpose of these monitoring visits was to ensure that the sponsors were keeping to the terms of their agreement with the MSC, both with regard to financial procedures and scheme content. As well as maintaining accountability and quality control, visits gave the MSC the opportunity to check the progress being made by individual trainees. This was also a responsibility of the Careers Service, whose duty it was to keep in contact with the trainees whilst they were on schemes and to continue to advise them about job prospects. I asked the sponsors that I interviewed how frequently they had been visited by the MSC and the Careers Service, and what had happened during the visits.

Many of the sponsors that I spoke to, particularly the smaller employers, did not understand the organisational distinction between the MSC and the Careers Service, and therefore were unable to distinguish between visits made by the two different organisations.

It seems that on average a scheme would receive a total of two visits every six months. Judging from those sponsors who were able to make a distinction between the 'Manpower' and the 'Careers', in most cases, one of these visits would be from each organisation. Thus trainees might expect, on average, one visit from an MSC Link Officer and one from a Careers Officer during their six month stay with a sponsor. However, there were sponsors who seemed to understand that there were two separate organisations and who said that there had been no contact between the Careers Service and their trainees.

The content of the visits from the two different organisations, judging once again from those sponsors who were able to make the distinction, appears to have been similar. The visitor would speak to both the sponsor and the trainee separately. They would ask how the trainee was getting on, and whether they were to be kept on permanently by the sponsor. The main difference recognised by the sponsors was that the MSC were more concerned with the administrative and financial details of the scheme. They would check that the agreed programme was being followed, and were critical if they thought the range of work experience being offered was too narrow.

The sponsors were not always impressed by those that monitored them. The monitors did not always appear to have a clear idea of what they were doing. They did not understand how the particular industry operated, and sometimes they did not know about the details of their own scheme. The impression of confusion was enhanced in the case of those sponsors who were unaware of the distinction between the MSC and the Careers Service. They realised that the people visiting them had different approaches to the scheme, but they did not understand why.

As well as gathering the opinions of sponsors, I questioned the local MSC about their monitoring practices and I accompanied one of their link officers during an afternoon of visits to a Group WEEP scheme.

First, a more formal impression of the content of monitoring visits to WEEP schemes can be gathered from the standard report form that

was used by the local link officers. The form consisted of a series of 29 questions under the headings of Recruitment, The Scheme, Management and Supervision, Financial Procedures, Conditions and Welfare, and Trainees' Comments. Most of these questions required a simple answer of 'yes' or 'no'. However, in the cases where the answer was 'no', some explanation or account of action that was to be taken was expected. The last question allowed the link officer the opportunity to record general observations about the scheme. S/he then had to classify the scheme into one of four general categories - a) very good; b) good; c) satisfactory; and d) unsatisfactory - and recommend any additional action that might be necessary. In the case of an unsatisfactory report, a letter would be sent to the sponsor, stating why the scheme was considered unsatisfactory and detailing the improvements that were necessary for it to be allowed to continue. A copy of the standard report form is reproduced in full below. (60)

On the question of the frequency of monitoring visits to WEEP schemes, it was said that this varied between six months and a year, depending upon what other demands were being put on the time of the link officers. At times in the past, when the number of places had needed to be expanded rapidly, link officers had had to concentrate on setting up new schemes. During such periods, regular monitoring had not existed. However, during most of 1982 it had been possible for link officers to devote two-thirds of their time to monitoring and it had been carried out on a regular basis. This experience of the immediate past was reflected in what I was told by the sponsors. However, at the time that I was actually carrying out my programme of visits, almost no monitoring of WEEP schemes was taking place. The MSC was concentrating almost exclusively on preparations for the new Youth Training Scheme, and the WEEP schemes were being allowed to run down.

The Group WEEP scheme that I observed being monitored was envisaged as a possible prototype for the Youth Training Scheme. It consisted of a number of small employers, and a large department store which took on the official role of sponsor. However, the real organising

force was one of the local colleges. It had been responsible for putting the group together in the first place, and it, in effect, managed the scheme on behalf of the official sponsor. The explanation for this situation lay in the fact that, under the Youth Training Scheme, colleges were not to be allowed to take on the role of managing agencies. In order to bypass this restriction, certain local colleges were attempting to set up consortia of employers which could act officially as managing agencies, while the colleges would in effect be in control. The Group WEEP scheme that I visited was intended to be a step in this direction. It catered for 32 trainees, and covered a number of different Occupational Training Families. The idea was that trainees might be rotated between different placements within the same OTF. The visits on which I accompanied the MSC link officer were all to small private rest homes.

In certain respects these visits were not typical. Because the main administrative and financial responsibilities were being undertaken by the college and the department store, these were not matters of major concern during the visits. The principle objective was to check what the placement providers had understood about the scheme from the college, and to see how they and the trainees were getting on. During the visits, the link officer had informal chats with both the sponsors and the trainees, not always separately. Although what I observed was perhaps not typical, I do believe that it illustrated some of the real problems that were encountered by link officers, particularly when attempting to monitor the smaller employers.

When making my own visits I was struck by the vast gulf that existed between the formal administrative regulations of the MSC and the personalised, and often idiosyncratic, practices of individual sponsors. This impression was reinforced by what I observed when accompanying the MSC Link officer on his visits. It was not necessarily the case that sponsors fell short of the MSC's formal requirements, it was more that these formal requirements were of only marginal relevance to the assessment of what was actually going on. Those sponsors who were best able to present their scheme in the terms formally approved by the MSC, were by no means necessarily

the best sponsors. On the other hand, there were those whose formal understanding of the scheme was poor and whose organisation was vague, who, nevertheless, put themselves out to provide the trainee with a valuable experience. Thus it was impossible for the link officer to go strictly 'by the book'. Room had to be left for compromise, and assessments were necessarily impressionistic.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the point is to present a cameo picture of one of the visits on which I accompanied the link officer. The particular rest home was situated in a substantial Victorian house in the Southsea holiday resort area of Portsmouth. The owner was a woman who herself was quite elderly. When we first came in we were introduced to some of the residents who were dozing in armchairs in the lounge. The only place where the link officer could talk in private to the owner was in a resident's bedroom. The link officer attempted to establish what she had been told about the scheme by the college, and to introduce to her the concept of the Youth Training Scheme. Although she tried to be helpful, the owner obviously knew little about the formal structure of the scheme that she was a part of. Furthermore, she was apprehensive about any changes that might be involved in a new scheme. In the end the link officer merely reassured her that for providers of work experience like herself the requirements of the Youth Training Scheme would be much the same as those of YOP. Throughout, the owner was anxious to make it clear that she was very satisfied with the trainee and kept repeating that she was "a good girly". Also, in the course of the conversation, it became clear that there was another YOP trainee undertaking some form of part-time work experience at the home. This the link officer knew nothing about. The trainee was not present at the time, and the owner was again confused, but it seemed probable that the girl concerned was on a Work Skills Course at another local college. The link officer did not attempt to talk in private to the trainee that he had come to see. Such conversation as he had with her took place round a kitchen table with the owner and other members of staff present. The link officer was sat down on a low sofa, with a cup of tea. The questions he asked the girl were mainly about the arrangements that had been made for her to collect her allowance from the department store that was

acting as the official sponsor. Trainees elsewhere had complained about the inconvenience of this arrangement. This girl, however, did not appear to be worried. For the most part she sat and smiled shyly. Meanwhile, the link officer was harassed by a licking dog.

8. End of Scheme

Under this heading I was concerned to find out how long trainees had stayed on the schemes, and what had happened to them when they left.

Approximately 70% of the trainees taken on by the sponsors that I interviewed had stayed for the normal maximum period of six months. The most common reasons for trainees leaving early were as follows: (1) the sponsor was not satisfied with the trainee; (2) the trainee was not interested in the work experience being offered; (3) the trainee thought that the allowance was too low; (4) the trainee found a permanent job elsewhere.

Sponsors gave many reasons for having to dismiss trainees as unsatisfactory: laziness, illness, stupidity, lateness, drug taking, stealing, etc. Some complained that the Careers Service had misled them by not telling them what the trainees were really like. It was those who had been least selective that had the most problems. The two sponsors, who had been prepared to accept any trainee sent to them by the Careers Service, had dismissed as unsatisfactory more than two-thirds of the trainees they had taken on.

Every sponsor except one had taken on at least one of their trainees as an employee at the end of the scheme. In the case of the single exception, the sponsor had offered jobs to three of his trainees, but they had all found employment elsewhere. Overall, the sponsors had taken on almost a third of the trainees they had originally offered work experience places to. However, not all of these were taken on as full-time permanent staff. Some were part-time, some were temporary, and some were taken on under the Young Workers Scheme. The new wage, after deductions, often amounted to little more than the old training allowance. Thus YOP was, in many cases, only the first rung on a ladder of low paid probationary status work.

Most of the sponsors knew what had happened to some of the trainees who they had not taken on. It seems that those that found jobs were more likely to do so in a field of employment other than the one in which they had gained experience. Some sponsors said that, if they did not offer a trainee a permanent job, it was unlikely that any other employer in the same field would. For those trainees who did not find employment elsewhere, it was either unemployment, more work experience, or emigration.

When asked what benefits trainees had received from their work experience, other than the chance of it leading directly to employment, sponsors emphasised the following qualities: confidence, responsibility, maturity, worldly wisdom, the ability to mix with a variety of people of different ages, work discipline, and the discipline to get up in the morning. They also mentioned the certificate that trainees received at the end of their scheme, though some were sceptical of its value. Some said that, at the very least, the trainees might have found out what they were not suited to do. One sponsor, however, thought that if the trainee did not get a job at the end of the scheme, then its effect was worse than doing nothing. It was cruel, he said, to give a young person a taste of work and then to snatch it away - "like offering someone a cream cake, and then slapping their hand when they reach out to take it."

9. Costs and Benefits for the Sponsor

Finally, I asked the sponsors to assess the costs and the benefits of their involvement in the scheme. Participation in the scheme was not supposed to affect a sponsor's normal pattern of recruitment. I included a direct question on this subject. I also asked the sponsors whether they were intending to contribute to YTS.

Most of the sponsors said that their original recruitment of trainees had been in addition to their normal recruitment of employees. However, when they took trainees on as employees at the end of their schemes, this was instead of their normal recruitment. Thus, the scheme gave them a free six months 'trying out' period, at the end of which, if the trainee was satisfactory and there was a vacancy coming up, they had someone tried and tested who was ready to fill the gap. One sponsor admitted that, from the outset, if he had not taken on a WEEP trainee he would have had to employ another permanent

member of staff. However, this was not as part of a normal pattern of recruitment, but as an expansion plan. Another sponsor said that, in order to keep on certain trainees at the end of their schemes, jobs had been created which would not have otherwise existed. This was the charity, and it was exceptional in its ability to create new jobs in this way.

When asked what it had cost them in terms of time and money to run the scheme, most sponsors found it difficult to quantify, but said that it did not amount to very much. The main factors mentioned were supervision and paper work, but neither of these were considered to be particularly burdensome. Some sponsors also mentioned the cost of breakages and mistakes for which trainees were responsible.

Sponsors' opinions on the productive contribution of the trainees varied greatly. The majority acknowledged that the trainees had worked hard and made a large contribution. In some cases it was said that this contribution had been comparable with that of permanent employees. In contrast, about a third of the sponsors said that the trainees had contributed very little. The main difference seems to have been in the kind of work that was being carried out. Where higher levels of technical skill were involved, trainees could not work productively on their own. The supervision that they needed tended to cancel the help that they could give.

Finally, with regard to the Youth Training Scheme, the sponsors split roughly evenly between those that expected to contribute and those that did not. Some, however, knew very little about the scheme. Amongst those that were negative towards it, the concern was expressed that if work experience placements were reduced to less than six months they would not be worthwhile, either for the trainee, or for the employer.

General Impressions

As well as recording specific answers to specific questions, after each visit I wrote some notes on the general impression that the

scheme had left with me. I tried to sum up the character of each scheme, what it had been doing, and why. I have now attempted to draw these notes together into a collective impression of the WEEP schemes that I visited.

Before making generalisations, the first impression that must be conveyed is that of variety. The sample of schemes that I visited was intended to cover a wide range of different types of sponsors. What my visits emphasised was that different types of sponsors produced very different types of schemes. It was not simply that the content of work experience differed according to the area of industry in which the sponsor was located. Different work experience content gave rise to different organisational and supervisory needs. How these needs were met often depended upon the size of the sponsor's organisation. Larger organisations were generally able to provide more formally structured programmes. With smaller employers, the organisation tended to be more vague and personalised, and the character of the scheme depended largely upon the character of the individual employer. Two of the schemes that I visited were in certain respects more like other types of YOP scheme than they were like the rest of the WEEP schemes. Thus, the scheme sponsored by the charitable organisation resembled in character a community project, and that sponsored by the national industry was like a high quality training course.

The great variety which existed amongst WEEP schemes was indicative of the emptiness and formality of the MSC's administrative definition of this type of scheme. As we have seen, most of the sponsors selected their trainees in the same way that they would have selected normal employees, and then treated them as they would have any other new recruits. The four required elements of content were in practice of the most minimal nature, amounting to what any good employer might be expected to provide for a young and inexperienced recruit. Induction and counselling, it seems could be interpreted by the sponsors very much as they liked. With regard to off-the-job training and further education, the sponsors' only obligation was to release their trainees for one day a week. Most trainees did

not make use of this opportunity (some having been discouraged by their sponsors); of those that did, most thought that the courses were a waste of time. Finally, 'planned work experience' was often little different from the work carried out by ordinary employees. The MSC tried to ensure that the trainees experienced a range of different tasks, but this was not always appreciated by either the sponsors or the trainees. Moreover, trainees were not always closely supervised and sometimes received no more than the absolute minimum of training required for them to be able to carry out the simple tasks that constituted their work experience. In effect, sponsors were being provided with free labour paid for by the MSC, and so long as they were prepared to make certain gestures in the direction of the required elements of content, they could use these extra employees much as they liked. MSC monitoring, even when it was carried out regularly, could only amount to a superficial inspection of what was happening.

Of course, some sponsors were prepared to put themselves out and to do considerably more than the minimum that they could get away with. But these were generally the employers who in the past would have acted in this way on their own initiative. For example, the scheme at the nationalised industry stood out from the rest that I visited as a well organised programme which systematically integrated work experience and training. However, it must be pointed out that two years before the company had been running its own year long programme for clerical trainees. The new WEEP scheme was merely a simplified version, using the same facilities, but with the MSC now paying the trainees. Similarly, those small employers who gave a lot of individual attention to their YOP trainees, probably would have done the same for young recruits in the past.

If there were some sponsors who were prepared to go beyond the minimum formal requirements, there were also those who were prepared to break the basic rules of the scheme. Substitution was of course the most controversial area of abuse. According to the regulations, the recruitment of YOP trainees was not to replace a sponsor's normal training and recruitment patterns, and was not to displace people who might otherwise have filled permanent jobs. At none of the schemes

that I visited was it admitted, or was I able to detect, that trainees were regularly being taken on instead of ordinary employees. However, at one of them it was admitted that, during a phase of expansion, a trainee had been recruited when otherwise a permanent employee would have been hired. This illustrates an important point: at many of the small employers who were the typical WEEP sponsors, there was no such thing as a normal pattern of recruitment and training. Thus, it was virtually impossible to establish conclusively whether or not they were using YOP trainees as a substitute for permanent employees. Yet, nor was the matter necessarily straightforward at a larger firm that did have a regular pattern of recruitment and training. At such firms, trainees were normally rotated between a number of different departments or areas of work. As a result, it could never be proved with absolute clarity that they were being used as substitutes for permanent employees in any particular department or area of work. Even if such a firm was simultaneously taking on YOP trainees and making permanent employees redundant, it could always be argued that the trainees were being taken on in a different area of work from where the redundancies were being made. Furthermore, as has already been seen in the case of the large nationalised industry sponsor that I visited, it was possible to replace an existing training scheme with an MSC funded WEEP scheme, so long as a certain period of time was allowed to elapse between the abolition of the one and the introduction of the other.

Although only one of the sponsors that I interviewed actually admitted that they themselves had taken on a YOP trainee instead of a permanent employee, a number of them stated that they knew of particular examples of such abuse and that they were sure that it was widespread within the area of business with which they were familiar. One estimated that the substitution rate was as high as 80%. While this may have been an exaggeration, a number of people that I spoke to locally, including a representative of the Careers Service, believed that the figure was around 50%. Generally, amongst employers and those in close contact with them, I was given the impression that, although it might be difficult to put your finger on it, there was a lot of abuse taking place. Moreover, this was accepted in a matter of fact way. Given the format of the scheme, it was thought naive to expect anything otherwise.

Obviously, the local MSC were aware that some substitution was taking place. Their own research at a national level had revealed a 30% rate of abuse. However, the official attitude that was usually adopted was one which attempted to minimise the scale of the problem.⁽⁶¹⁾ It was acknowledged that there were abuses, but it was implied that they were not on a significant scale. At the same time, it was emphasised that, if any allegation was made about a particular scheme, it would be followed up immediately. Furthermore, the regular process of monitoring was supposed to act as a check upon such abuses. However, as we have seen, this was sometimes irregular and generally superficial. Whilst the fact that a link officer was liable to come round periodically might have had a certain generalised deterrent effect, there was no specific procedure involved that could be expected to reveal substitution taking place. If the standard monitoring form reproduced below is referred to again, it will be seen that Question 7 asks, "Are sponsor's normal recruitment and training arrangements continuing?" So long as the sponsor affirmed that they were, there was little that the link officer could do to prove otherwise. Furthermore, given that the majority of a link officer's time was spent in trying to generate new places, often under considerable pressure, there was little motivation for them to probe too deeply into the operations of an existing sponsor. Thus, as a general rule, it appeared to be assumed that schemes were not involved in abuses, unless someone specifically alleged that they were. Such allegations were sometimes made, either by the Careers Service, or a trade union, or the media, or a particular individual such as the parent of a trainee. But even then, given the complications of irregular recruiting and trainee rotation that have been described above, it was almost impossible for the MSC to prove that the abuse had taken place. Generally, they had to be satisfied with a statement from the company saying that no substitution was involved. If this was not regarded as satisfactory, the scheme could be closed down, or put on 'hold', or the numbers of trainees reduced.

On the basis of the research that I carried out, it is impossible to conclude with any certainty on the proportion of WEEP trainees in the Portsmouth TWA that were being used as direct substitutes for permanent employees. However, what can be said, and is of some importance, is that the local MSC had no way of knowing either. All they could

do was ask the sponsors to abide by the rules, follow up any allegations, and assume, if they did not hear otherwise, that everything was in order. This did not amount to being in control of the situation. Moreover, while nobody could say for certain how much substitution was taking place, it should be recorded that there was a widespread feeling amongst those who were close to the situation that the schemes investigated and closed down by the MSC represented only the tip of the iceberg.

Although during my visits to WEEP schemes I saw little evidence of the direct substitution of YOP trainees for permanent employees, I was continually aware of a more indirect form of substitution taking place. All but one of the sponsors had recruited at least one of their YOP trainees as a permanent employee, and overall approximately a third of the trainees had been given employment by their sponsors at the end of their schemes. This of course was perfectly legitimate and was generally regarded as an important measure of the success of this kind of provision. However, if what was actually happening was examined more closely, it became more questionable. Let it be assumed that in the first place sponsors were, as they were supposed to, taking on trainees in addition to their normal permanent staff. Then, when it came to the end of the scheme, a proportion of these trainees were being kept on permanently by their sponsors. In theory these two phases could be regarded statically as discrete events. First the sponsor offered the trainee work experience, then at the end of the scheme, in the same way as any other employer might have done, they offered the trainee a permanent job. In practice this was very rarely what took place. At most of the schemes that I visited, from the outset, the offering of work experience was explicitly regarded as an alternative strategy for the recruitment of permanent employees. As one sponsor put it to me, he had the trainees on "sale or return". He could try them out for six months without any obligation and at government expense. Then, if they had come up to scratch, he could use them to fill his permanent vacancies. Given such an opportunity, there could be little incentive for any employer to offer a permanent job to an untried school leaver.

Thus, although WEEP may not have been replacing permanent employees directly, it was at least partially replacing the normal system of

recruitment for school leavers into permanent employment. Furthermore, when viewed dynamically, the principal effect of such a system was not to enhance the job opportunities of school leavers, but to delay their entry into permanent employment by adding the requirement of six months work experience as a pre-condition for being considered. Of course, there were certain individual trainees, particularly perhaps those with poor school records, who through work experience were able to prove themselves capable of doing a certain job, when otherwise they might not have been given the opportunity. But then this was likely to be at the expense of some other school leaver, who might otherwise have been offered the job merely on the strength of their school record. Or else it might be at the expense of an unemployed adult who could not be tried out on such advantageous terms before being recruited permanently. Rarely could the jobs being offered to YOP trainees at the end of their work experience be described as additional jobs that would not have otherwise existed. Of the sponsors that I interviewed, it was only the charitable organisation, which was in a slightly different situation from an ordinary business, that was able to create a new job specifically for a trainee whom they wanted to keep on. Elsewhere, with the strict criteria of profit and loss applying, it was highly unlikely that the fact that a good trainee was available would prove to be the decisive factor in a decision to create a new job. Thus, generally, what was happening was that the six months of work experience was merely being integrated as a pre-condition into the normal pattern of recruitment.

The MSC were of course well aware that this was how the scheme was being used by many sponsors. So long as in theory it could be argued that the permanent jobs were not being filled by the trainees until they were actually employed at the end of their work experience, the situation had to be accepted as legitimate. Indeed, insofar as it helped to raise the placement rate of the Programme and to enhance its image as a job-getter, it was regarded as positively beneficial. Moreover, a sponsor was more likely to be considered with suspicion if they never recruited a trainee onto their permanent staff than if they regularly recruited a certain proportion of their intake. Thus, for most practical purposes, it was accepted and encouraged that WEEP schemes should be operated by their sponsors as adjuncts

to their normal means of recruitment. The implications of such a situation for the wider aims of the Programme did not appear to be seriously considered.

Drawing together the points that have been made above, the general impression that emerges is that of the strength of the WEEP sponsors' position and the benefits that accrued to them from their involvement in the Programme. The MSC was heavily dependent upon their good will, and to a large extent had to trust them to fulfil their obligations to the trainees and to abide by the ground rules of the scheme. Meanwhile, the sponsors enjoyed six months of free labour from the trainees and the opportunity to try them out as potential future employees. Yet it was the trainees, not the sponsors, who were supposed to be the principal beneficiaries of the schemes.

It has already been seen that as far as opportunities for recruitment into permanent jobs with their sponsors were concerned, the benefits that trainees derived from WEEP were marginal. The principal effect was to add six months of work experience as a pre-condition for being recruited into jobs which otherwise they might have got straight from school. Much the same analysis can be applied to the situation of trainees who were recruited by employers other than their sponsors. Such employers were not directly using WEEP as their own recruitment mechanism, but still it was unlikely that they were creating additional jobs specifically to be able to take on the trainees. Thus, whether recruitment was by sponsors, or by other employers, the situation was much the same from the point of view of the trainees - the six months work experience was an additional test that they had to go through before being considered for a job. Moreover, for those trainees who were not recruited by their sponsors, their work experience was not necessarily an asset in the search for jobs elsewhere. Because many sponsors were using WEEP as a recruitment mechanism, the fact that a trainee had not been kept on at the end of their scheme could in some circumstances be taken as an indication that they were not capable of doing that form of work. It will be remembered that some sponsors indicated that if they did not offer a trainee a job, it was unlikely that the trainee would be able to find one elsewhere in the same line of work. Thus for the trainee who had not been recruited by their sponsor, the fact that they had undertaken work experience without being taken on, might have a negative effect on their prospects of finding similar employment elsewhere.

Of course, the benefits that trainees derived from WEEP schemes cannot be judged purely in terms of the effects on their prospects of being recruited for permanent employment. Sponsors mentioned qualities of character, such as confidence and maturity, which they felt that the work experience had helped to develop in their trainees. On the other hand, the view was also expressed that for trainees who were not subsequently offered permanent employment, work experience did more harm than good, by raising hopes that were then dashed. One impression that particularly struck me during my case study visits was that of the vulnerability of the position of the trainees. Most were fresh out of school and by definition had little experience of the world of work. They were likely to be the only such trainee at their work place. They had no organisation of their own. Trade unions were often not present, and where they were, rarely had any contact with the trainees. One visit each from the MSC and the Careers Service could be expected over the six month duration of a scheme. Of course, in theory, the trainees had the right to complain if they thought that their sponsors were not treating them correctly. However, under such circumstances, few would have the confidence to do so. For most trainees, any work was better than the boredom of being on the dole, even if they only received a training allowance. Many regarded the schemes as real jobs and felt obliged to their sponsors. Such feelings of obligation were often reinforced by the hope that they might be kept on permanently at the end of the scheme. Thus, the inevitable corollary of the strength of the position enjoyed by the sponsors, was the weakness of that of the trainees who found themselves in the position of being on 'sale or return'.

In conclusion, it should be noted that, apart from cheapness, the most widely acknowledged advantage of WEEP schemes over the other forms of YOP provision was their 'reality'. It was this that was seen as giving the experience its inherent value and its effectiveness as a route to permanent employment. Yet, at the same time, it was the reality of the experience that led to the problems that have been identified above. Because the trainees undertook work that was often indistinguishable from that carried out by permanent employees, there was always an inherent danger of substitution.

Yet, if they had always been carefully supervised and monitored, and everything had been done 'by the book', could the experience still have been described as 'real'? Arguably, the most important thing that a school leaver has to learn about the reality of the world of work is precisely that things are not like that. Thus there was a 'Catch 22' situation about such work experience. The more real the work, the more valuable it was as an experience for the trainees, yet the more likely it was that they were doing what could have been a real job, either for them or for someone else. And even when a scheme was not being used directly to substitute for permanent jobs, it was likely that it was merely providing the sponsor, or employers in general, with a substitute mechanism for selection and recruitment. Thus, while the strength of WEEP was that it was 'part of the real world', its weakness was, that as such, it often replaced existing opportunities rather than making a positive addition. Through paying the trainees' allowances, the MSC was to a large extent subsidising employers to do what they would have done anyway, while bringing only marginal benefits to the trainees.

B Other Work Experience Schemes and Projects

By September 1982, this sector of YOP was providing approximately 520 places in South East Hampshire. The places were distributed as follows: there were 10 Community Projects providing over 270 places; one Training Workshop (divided between two locations) providing 150 places; one unit of Community Industry providing approximately 70 places; and an Information Technology Centre providing 30 places. The occupancy rate throughout the sector was approximately 90 per cent, and the sector accounted for just under a quarter of the total number of occupied places in South East Hampshire. The Training Workshop, the ITEC, and the larger Community Projects had, by this time, been upgraded to provide New Training Places.

The upgrading process had been carried out by a Regional Quality Improvement team acting in liaison with the Local Area Office staff. In the case of a large project, such as the Training Workshop, the process had consisted of an eight day programme spread over a three month period. The content of this programme was mainly concerned with

the introduction of the Basic Skills Profile and Trainee Centred Reviewing. A summary timetable is reproduced in the appendix below. (62)

My local case study included six visits to non-WEEP schemes and projects. Three were to Community Projects and one each to the Training Workshop, Community Industry and the ITEC. Between them, these six schemes accounted for more than two-thirds of the total number of places available within this sector. Thus it was possible to observe a much larger proportion of the total provision within this sector than it was within the WEEP sector. The questionnaire that I used varied slightly from scheme to scheme. It had the same common core as the WEEP questionnaire, but it also had additional elements which were adapted to the requirements of individual schemes. The results that were obtained are set out below in a manner similar to the presentation of the WEEP sector material.

In addition to the programme of visits, I attended a meeting of local scheme managers with representatives of the MSC and the Careers Service. The main concern of this meeting was with the transition to YTS. Nevertheless, it provided some further useful information about the experience of YOP in this particular sector of provision.

1. Background

I collected certain background information about the history and development of each of the schemes that I visited. This I have summarised in the form of a brief character sketch for each of the six schemes.

a) Community Project 1

This was a large and varied Community Project sponsored by the Portsmouth Council of Community Service. It had been set up in July 1981, and originally it catered for 30 trainees divided between five groups carrying out different kinds of work. Since then it had expanded rapidly. When I visited in March 1983, 23 staff were employed providing places for over 100 trainees divided between 13

groups, with a 14th group in the process of being established. The groups, which were spread throughout locations in the city, were as follows: three painting and decorating - working on churches, community centres and the homes of elderly people; two catering - providing luncheon clubs for the elderly and the disabled; two environmental - carrying out a variety of outdoor work such as ground clearance, landscaping, pathing, fencing and general renovation; one communications - offering art, design and photographic services; one materials bank and craft unit - collecting and distributing industrial scrap materials to playgroups, and making large toy units such as Wendy Houses; one clerical - providing a community clerical and typing service; and one electrical workshop - designing, fitting and servicing battery powered units for the disabled. The 14th group which was in the process of being set up was to be a sewing workshop. Since September 1982, the project had been upgraded to the status of providing New Training Places.

b) Community Project 2

This was one of a number of small drama projects sponsored by the Hampshire Education Department. It had been set up in September 1981, and was attached to a community drama centre located in an old school building. It employed one supervisor and offered places for eight trainees. The main work of the project was the staging of educational plays for local schools. It had also performed a street theatre on behalf of charity. At the time of my visit, it had not yet been upgraded to provide New Training Places and its future under YTS was still uncertain.

c) Community Project 3

This was a small renovation project sponsored by the Portsmouth Youth Activities Committee. It had been started in January 1981 with one supervisor and six trainees. It had since expanded to three supervisors and 14 trainees. It was located in a 19th century fort which had been allowed to fall into a state of partial dereliction. The work of the project was to renovate and maintain the fort so that it could be used as a youth activities centre. At the time of my

visit the project was in the process of being upgraded to provide New Training Places.

d) The Training Workshop

This was a large scheme sponsored by the Portsmouth City Council and supervised by a committee with charitable status called the Beneficial Foundation. This committee took its name from the Old Beneficial School, a listed building located in a rundown area of high unemployment known as Portsea. In October 1978 the City Council agreed to acquire and refurbish the old school so that eventually it could be used as a Training Workshop. Meanwhile, in the spring of 1979, a pilot scheme was started for 20 trainees located in temporary premises. In September 1980 the Training Workshop was officially established in the refurbished Old Beneficial School. It originally offered 40 places divided between five areas of work. Subsequently it expanded, and in April 1982 an extension was opened in an old factory at Paulsgrove which was another local unemployment blackspot. This brought the potential capacity of the scheme up to 150 places. I only visited the Portsea site. At the time of my visit it offered places for approximately 70 trainees divided into six sections: Upholstery, Joinery, Brickwork, Outwork, Catering and Administration. A seventh section, working with Glass Reinforced Plastic, was planned. The scheme as a whole had been officially upgraded to provide New Training Places in October 1982.

e) Community Industry

The first point that must be made about Community Industry is that it was never a part of the official structure of YOP. Thus it is necessary to make certain preliminary remarks about Community Industry in general, before detailing the particulars of the South Hampshire unit. Community Industry was created more than 10 years ago in response to the historically high levels of unemployment experienced in the winter of 1971-72. The idea came from the National Association of Youth Clubs, and the Department of Employment provided a grant to finance the scheme. The object was to provide disadvantaged young people, who were experiencing difficulty finding or keeping regular

employment, with up to a year of realistic work experience on community projects which would not have otherwise been carried out. The scheme was originally implemented on a small scale in eight selected areas, but it gradually grew, so that by 1979 7,000 places were being offered nationally. Although in that same year the MSC took over the administration of its grant, Community Industry continued to maintain a separate identity from YOP. It was run by its own National Management Committee, with its own national and area level administrative organisation. It aimed at a particular client group, and it maintained a distinct philosophy of the purpose of the work experience that it provided. Unlike YOP, it took young people on as employees and paid them wages. Admittedly, after deductions, there was little difference between a 16 year old's wage on Community Industry and the YOP allowance (£29.70 compared to £25), but there was a larger differential for 17 and 18 year olds.

My reasons for including the South Hampshire unit in the local case study were twofold. First, because it was an important and integral element of local provision for the young unemployed, and therefore, for practical purposes, was often regarded as a part of YOP. Secondly, because it was in fact part of a distinct and different organisation, and therefore could be used to contrast and throw into relief certain features of local YOP schemes. The South Hampshire unit was set up in 1976 under the sponsorship of Hampshire County Council. Based at Paulsgrove on the outskirts of Portsmouth, it covered an area extending as far west as Southampton. Originally the unit had vacancies for 50 young people; subsequently it expanded to offer approximately 70 places. Small teams carried out projects in the following areas of work: painting and decorating - redecorating churches and community centres; building - work for churches and local voluntary societies; landscaping - reclamation and maintenance of an overgrown estate on behalf of a local borough council; a sewing and upholstery workshop - producing curtains for schools and community centres, and soft toys to be sold to charities at cost price; a joinery workshop - servicing site projects and providing play group equipment; and various placements, mainly at day nurseries. Because Community Industry was outside YOP, the unit was not subject to the upgrading process in preparation for YTS.

f) The Information Technology Centre

Although a part of YOP, the Information Technology Centre (ITEC), like Community Industry, must be regarded in some respects as an exceptional scheme. ITECs were not one of the original elements of YOP, but were introduced during the fourth year of the Programme as part of the quality improvement plan leading towards the introduction of YTS. They were first announced by the Prime Minister in July 1981, in a package of special measures which can be seen as a response to the riots of that summer. Initially, 20 ITECs were to be established in inner city areas with high youth unemployment. They were to be modelled on the well-publicised success of the Notting Dale Technology Centre, a YOP funded training workshop in West London sponsored by the Notting Dale Urban Studies Centre. Their objective was to provide unemployed young people with training and work experience in electronics, computing and basic information technology skills. They were exceptional in respect of the fact that they were a joint venture, funded both by the MSC and by the Department of Industry. MSC funding was to be on the same basis as for training workshops. The Department of Industry was to provide each scheme with an extra £35,000 in its first year for additional capital equipment and the topping-up of staff salaries, and a lesser amount in subsequent years, principally to maintain the continuity of the salary top-up.

Portsmouth was not one of the locations originally suggested for an ITEC. However, the Conservative-led City Council responded rapidly to the announcement of the scheme, offering to act as a sponsor and to provide accommodation for the centre within the Civic Offices. Although in national terms Portsmouth could not be considered an unemployment blackspot, the rundown of the Dockyard which had been announced only a month previously made the city a strong candidate for some gesture of Government concern. Portsmouth duly emerged as one of the 20 proposed sites, and once the scheme had been approved in principle, a consultant on loan from the locally based computer multi-national IBM was commissioned to make a more detailed feasibility study. His report argued that Portsmouth was 'ideally suited' for the scheme.⁽⁶³⁾ The rundown of the Dockyard was bound to lead to a further decline in the traditional skill based jobs in heavy engineering; whereas, given some improvement in the economy,

the existing nucleus of high technology industries around Portsmouth could be expected to expand. The role of the ITEC in this context would be to encourage some of the less academically qualified young people in the area to look for job opportunities in these new and growing industries, and to give them a better chance of being successful. Discussions with selected local employers established that the training to be given in the proposed centre could help the trainees to find work, "particularly with those firms trying to identify young people looking for sub technician level training and those looking for clerical staff to use computer terminals." (64) It was also established that the training would complement, rather than duplicate, courses requiring academic qualifications being run by local colleges. The report concluded that the scheme should go ahead without delay. The Portsmouth ITEC started up in May 1982, located in the Civic Offices and sponsored by the City Council. IBM provided a manager on secondment. The scheme offered 30 New Training Places of 12 months duration.

2. Recruitment and Selection

The formal requirements laid down by the MSC for recruitment and selection were the same for these other work experience schemes as for WEEP schemes. Recruitment had to take place through the Careers Service or the Employment Service, but the sponsors were allowed to have the final say on selection. Once again they were asked to take account of the fact that YOP was aimed particularly to meet the needs of less able and less qualified young people. (65)

All the schemes that I visited recruited exclusively through the Careers Service and the local Job Centres, apart from one, which had placed its own advertisement in the local paper.

Selection policies varied. The Training Workshop and Community Projects 1 and 3 were prepared to accept virtually any young person sent to them by the Careers Service. Because WEEP sponsors and certain other schemes tended to 'cream off' the most able and best qualified young people, these more open schemes were usually left with the lower ability trainees and those with particular problems.

Thus, for example, at the Training Workshop 30% of the trainees had literacy and numeracy levels below the age of eight, and almost as many had criminal records. These figures would have been higher if a certain degree of selection had not been introduced in order to maintain what was considered to be a manageable balance. The problem for these schemes was how to remain open to the lower ability trainees that needed them, without being regarded as the last resort ('a dust-bin') for the rejects from the more selective schemes. It was a problem that was impossible to solve while WEEP schemes and other elements of YOP were allowed to select with no real obligation to meet the needs of the less able.

The other two YOP schemes that I visited were both more selective. The ITEC did not require any minimum academic qualifications, but it did not accept those at a remedial level of ability. Candidates sent by the Careers Service were interviewed and tested. It was not necessarily the most able who were selected. Youngsters who had the ability and the qualification to get onto a conventional computer course at a further education college, were recommended to do. Those selected were those whom it was thought would gain the most from what the ITEC had to offer, and who displayed the most interest and enthusiasm. The result was a group of trainees without any special academic qualifications, but for the most part well-motivated and without the kind of problems having to be dealt with at the Training Workshop and other less selective schemes. The other selective scheme was the drama project. Selection was carried out by means of auditions. The ability to fit in with the rest of the group was said to be the most important quality required. No formal qualifications were asked for. However, this scheme had the highest average level of academic qualifications of any that I visited - six 'O' levels, the range being between none and four 'A' levels. It was this scheme that had used the local press to advertise, and it seemed to have attracted and selected young people who were already highly motivated towards a career in acting - indeed, one of the trainees had been to drama school.

Finally, Community Industry's recruitment and selection was different insofar as its policy was deliberately to pick out the young people

with particular problems and difficulties. The Careers Service referred youngsters whom they thought might benefit. Community Industry accepted anyone prepared and able to work.

Five out of the six schemes that I visited recruited a disproportionate number of male trainees. At the Training Workshop and Community Industry the ratio was 2:1, at the ITEC it was 4:1. The exception was the drama project.

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The same four main components that were specified for WEEP schemes - induction, planned work experience, training or further education, and counselling - were specified for all other work experience schemes.

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3. Induction

With regard to induction, the most noticeable difference amongst the schemes that I visited was between those that had been upgraded to provide New Training Places, and those that had not. The New Training Place schemes (the Training Workshop, Community Project 1, and the ITEC), had much more formalised induction procedures than the other schemes. In the case of the Training Workshop, the induction stage lasted two weeks. As well as including information on domestic arrangements, health and safety, and rules, there were assessments made of the trainees by a personnel officer and individual profiles were compiled. At the end of the process, a training programme was negotiated and agreed with the trainee. In the case of the large Community Project, the procedure was similar, but lasted for only one week. As well as being assessed on the basis of a 'Can-Do' profile, trainees were given the opportunity for systematic job sampling before they were matched up with a particular scheme. At the ITEC induction lasted for only two days, but was followed by a month of basic introductory training before trainees decided in which area they would like to specialise.

In the case of the schemes that had not been upgraded, induction consisted of little more than a brief chat about rules and domestic arrangements. Community Industry put less emphasis on induction than any of the YOP schemes. New employees would be given only the minimum information necessary before getting started at the worksite.

4. Planned Work Experience

Some indication has already been given of the range of work experience offered by each of the schemes and projects. During my visits I was concerned to find out how this range of work experience had been decided upon, and what relation it bore to the demands of the local labour market. I was also interested to find out how individual trainees' programmes were organised within the total range of work experience on offer at each scheme. Finally, I tried to establish what training content was included directly with the work experience.

The three largest schemes (the Training Workshop, Community Project 1, and Community Industry) covered an overlapping range of work experience. Thus, all three had groups (or were planning to have groups) working in upholstery/sewing workshops; both the Training Workshop and the Community Project offered catering and administrative/clerical work; the Training Workshop and Community Industry both had joinery workshops and undertook building maintenance/outwork; the Community Project and Community Industry both undertook painting and decorating, and environmental/landscaping work. Given these overlaps, it was interesting to compare the reasons put forward by the different schemes for including the same kinds of work experience.

Both the Training Workshop and the Community Project claimed that they had taken account of the needs of the local labour market, but were vague about how exactly this had been done. References were made to consultations with the Careers Service, the Chamber of Commerce, and certain Industrial Training Boards, but it was not clear what information had been obtained, or how it had been used. Only the work experience and training undertaken in the sewing and upholstery workshops seemed to have a definite connection to sources of demand in the local

labour market. Both the Training Workshop and the Community Project had made arrangements for local clothing manufacturers to take on some of their trainees. In one case the arrangement went so far as the firm providing sewing machines and dismissing its training officer, so that the scheme could then re-employ this training officer and use the sewing machines to train its trainees to the requirements of that firm. Yet, where such close arrangements did not exist, there seemed to be little evidence that the needs of the local labour market were being systematically considered. Rather it seemed to be the case that the kinds of work experience being provided were those for which staff and facilities were most readily and cheaply available, and these were likely to be in precisely the areas of the local economy in which demand for labour was slack. This was unavoidable, given the limited resources available to be spent on capital equipment, and the fact that staff had to be recruited from the unemployment register, generally on short-term contracts at low rates of pay. Almost by definition, the skills of the staff employed were likely to be redundant within the local labour market, since otherwise the individuals concerned would not have been available or willing to work for the schemes.

Unlike the two larger YOP schemes, Community Industry made no claim that the work experience that it provided was related to the needs of the local labour market. Rather, it took on work that needed to be done in the local community, and which could be easily and cheaply organised. The fact that what it undertook overlapped so closely with the range of work experience being provided by the two YOP schemes reinforces the impression that the same factors were of determining importance for these schemes also.

Of the three smaller YOP schemes, two of them acknowledged that the work experience that they provided had not been planned in relation to the needs of the local labour market. For example, there was little chance of any of the trainees in the drama scheme finding employment locally as actors. The main factors determining the range of work experience available had been the needs of the projects themselves and the skills of the staff which they had been able to recruit.

The exception was the ITEC. As we have already seen, at the planning stage of this scheme a feasibility study was carried out which made some attempt to examine the likely future demand for information technology skills in the Portsmouth area. The analysis was only at a very generalised level, and the ITEC was never intended to give a precise vocational training for specific opportunities identified in the local labour market. Rather the purpose was to provide a small number of school leavers with an added layer of technological training and work experience. Nevertheless, it was possible to take some account of the jobs that might become available locally, and of the particular knowledge that might be required by a young person applying for them.

The ITEC was exceptional insofar as the training and work experience that it provided was directed at an expanding area of the local labour market. It is important to understand why this was possible. Other schemes, we have seen, were restricted by limitations of staff and resources. The ITEC was able to avoid these restrictions because it was provided with the necessary financial support in order to do so. As we have seen, it not only received the standard MSC funding for a training workshop, but also a substantial additional amount from the Department of Industry. Thus the sum spent on each ITEC trainee, approximately £4,000 per annum, was almost double that spent on the average YOP trainee. This additional amount was earmarked, in the first place, to enable the purchase of the more expensive capital equipment required to provide training and work experience in such a modern industry, and secondly, to provide the salary top-ups necessary in order to recruit staff from a more competitive labour market. Furthermore, as a prestige scheme, the ITEC received special assistance from the City Council and from local industry, both in terms of the provision of premises and the secondment of staff. Thus in many respects the ITEC must be regarded as a special case. It had advantages that were not shared by the average YOP scheme, and which could not have been, without a substantial increase in costs.

With regard to individual trainee's programmes and the integration of training content, as had been the case in the WEEP sector, the organisation tended to be more systematic in the larger schemes. These, it will be remembered, had already been upgraded to New Training Place status.

In the larger of the three Community Projects that I visited (Community Project 1), each trainee went through two 16 week units of work experience on separate projects. Training was integrated into each of the units and was assessed by means of a skills profile. Then there was a further 16 week unit of work experience in an external industrial placement organised and monitored by the Project's staff. Although this programme had been formalised through the process of upgrading to New Training Place status, the basis had already existed before.

At the Training Workshop, the introduction of New Training Places seems to have necessitated more radical changes in the programmes pursued by individual trainees. Originally the MSC had emphasised the need for the Workshop to recover a certain proportion of its running costs by producing and selling goods on a profitable basis. This overriding consideration had acted as a constraining influence upon the organisation of the programmes of individual trainees. What tended to happen was that a trainee would be assigned to a certain section, given some rudimentary training, and then expected to get on with productive work which was often of a highly repetitive nature. Thus the pressure for profitable production minimised the scope for the development of training content. Furthermore, there was no systematic rotation of trainees between the different sections. Some stayed on the same section, going through the same repetitive production work, for the whole duration of their programme at the Workshop. However, this was often the result of their own choice. As has been noted already of some of the larger WEEP schemes, many trainees preferred to stay in the area of work that they were first introduced to, and resisted any attempts to move them on. The effects of NTP upgrading were just beginning to show at the time of my visit. A shift in emphasis was taking place, away from profitable production work towards more formalised training. The sections were being organised within a framework of Occupational Training Families, and the trainees were to be rotated systematically between sections covered by the same or related OTFs. They were to spend three months in each of the three sections, before going out to an external work experience placement for their final three months. The training content within each section was being increased so that up to 40% of the time was to be spent on

off-the-job training. For each section a systematic training programme had been identified, and a Basic Skills Checklist was being introduced to give a profile assessment of the trainees' achievements.

Once again it is interesting to compare these two larger YOP schemes with the Community Industry Unit. It should be remembered that the young people at Community Industry were employees, not trainees. No attempt was made to rotate them between different areas of work or to include any elements of formalised training. When a young person was taken on, they would be allocated to a team, and so long as they were able to fit in, they would stay with that team for the rest of the year. The theory underlying this approach was that the work undertaken was primarily a medium for personal development rather than vocational training. What was important was the personal and social skills developed through working together in a disciplined team under the supervision of an adult, rather than any vocational skills that might be associated with the content of the work. Thus continuity of working relationships within teams was valued above the breadth of range of work experience covered. This order of priorities was also reflected by the mode in which the progress of the youngsters was reviewed. Thus the formal reviews, which took place at four, seven and 10 months, were more concerned with attitude, behaviour, and personal development, than with job performance or vocational skill development.

It can now be seen that, although there was a considerable degree of overlap in the overall range of work experience offered, the underlying approach and actual organisation of individual programmes was different at Community Industry from the two larger YOP schemes. However, this difference should not be over-estimated. Although the philosophy was different, the actual practice at the Training Workshop before it had been upgraded to New Training Place status was in fact quite similar to that of Community Industry. As we have seen, the training content was minimal and the trainees tended to stay in their original sections. Furthermore, in certain respects, the NTP upgrading process seemed to have been going against the grain. Some trainees had left the scheme altogether rather than be moved away from 'their

section'. Also some of the supervisors appeared to be unhappy with the use of complex skill checklists, and preferred to assess trainees in more rudimentary ways which were mainly concerned with attitude and behaviour. So although the YOP schemes were being pushed into a more clearly defined vocational training mould, there seemed to be a natural tendency for them to revert and converge with the more long-established practices of Community Industry. And, insofar as this convergence was taking place, Community Industry appeared once again to provide the more accurate and meaningful rationale for what was going on.

The two smaller Community Projects had not yet attempted to introduce more formalised training programmes. Basically the trainees carried out whatever work needed to be done for the project, and were given any training that might be necessary for them to be able to do it. However, both were in the process of making plans for more systematised training programmes that would be acceptable under YTS. The fact that these had not yet been introduced should not be thought to indicate that these smaller schemes were necessarily of inferior quality. During my visits to the various schemes, I was struck by the fact that the formal presentation and organisation of training programmes was no guarantee of their quality. Far more important than any formal structures was the character and experience of the individual supervisors who were working with the trainees. Thus the best and the worst organised units of work experience and training that I saw were both accommodated under the same formal structures within one of the larger schemes that I visited.

Finally, of all the schemes that I visited in this sector, the ITEC was the one that most resembled a formal training course, in both presentation and reality. All the trainees were given a month's basic training, during which they were introduced to both hardware and software. They were then allowed to choose in which of these two areas they would like to concentrate. Within each of them, they could follow their interests through a range of courses leading towards some form of longer term project. Their progress was reviewed on a monthly basis using a specially designed 10 page profile which listed all of the skills that could be learnt at the ITEC. What the trainees could prove that they had learnt over the previous month was ticked off on the profile, and a plan was made for what they would tackle over the next month. The review thus consisted primarily of the

objective testing of vocational skills, though some assessment of attitude and behaviour was also made. 60% or more of the year was made up by these courses. The remaining time was taken up by external work experience placements which were organised and monitored by the ITEC.

5. Off-the-Job Training

YOP trainees in this sector had the same right to day release for off-the-job training as those in the WEEP sector. In general, these schemes played a more positive role in organising this kind of provision for their trainees than did the WEEP sponsors.

With the exception of the Drama Project and Community Industry, all of the schemes sent some of their trainees on Social and Life Skills courses at local colleges. However, they had all found the arrangement unsatisfactory and were looking for alternatives. The major problem seemed to be the lack of liaison between the colleges and the schemes. The result was that the provision put on by the colleges often appeared to be irrelevant or antithetical to the work being done by the schemes. One scheme administrator admitted that their scheme might be partly to blame for this, but in general it was the colleges that were regarded as being at fault. One scheme manager complained bitterly of the bad organisation and loose discipline of the college staff that was undermining his efforts to build up good work habits amongst his trainees. As was the case in the WEEP sector, the trainees shared these poor opinions of college provision. At the Training Workshop, all the trainees were sent on an initial three day block release, which was then followed by weekly day release. Most, however, stopped going, complaining that it was boring and irrelevant - "they kept talking about what we were going to do, but we never did anything." In one case, at a different scheme, the trainee was so intimidated by the school-like atmosphere of the college that he did not get past the door.

The main alternative being considered by the dissatisfied scheme managers was to organise their own 'in-house' off-the-job training.

They could then ensure that it would fit in with the rest of the programme. This was already being done by the larger of the Community Projects, which was able to offer remedial numeracy and literacy as well as social and life skills. It is also interesting to note the success of a discussion group which was led by one of the supervisors at the Training Workshop. Every Friday afternoon, instead of working, this supervisor had a free-ranging discussion with the trainees in his section. The same youngster who had got bored by all the talking at college apparently enjoyed these discussions. The difference was that they were with their mates in a familiar environment, and the discussion could flow naturally from their working relationships. The supervisor could lead the discussion because he had gained their respect by working with them, and was not just talking abstractly about things that they were going to be doing. However, it should be said that not every supervisor was capable of playing this role.

At the Drama Project, formal off-the-job training in social and life skills was considered to be unnecessary. The development of social and life skills was regarded as an integral element of drama. Acting developed the confidence of the trainees, taught them how to work together and solve problems as a team, and sometimes forced them to improvise under pressure. Likewise, at Community Industry, there was no provision made for formal social and life skills training. Insofar as social and life skills were considered, they were regarded as something that might be passed on informally by the adult supervisors in the course of normal working relationships, rather than as a separate skill that could be taught off-the-job. This in fact was a view that was shared by a number of the staff on the YOP schemes. They regarded the acquisition of social and life skills as something integral to the experience of working with adults, and did not think that they could be taught in a conventional educational context such as that provided by the colleges.

As well as sending their trainees on social and life skills courses, some schemes encouraged them to use their day release entitlement to study for vocational qualifications. At the Training Workshop, 20% of the trainees were undertaking City and Guilds courses, and a further 5% were preparing for 'O' levels and RSA examinations. These courses

appear to have been more satisfactory. Another scheme had sent two of their trainees on a three day residential course organised by a private training organisation, and reported that it had been very successful indeed.

6. Counselling

The requirement that trainees should have access to support and personal advice applied to these schemes in the same way as it did to those in the WEEP sector.

As was the case in the WEEP sector, it was difficult to establish how exactly this requirement was interpreted in practice. For the most part, in all of the schemes, counselling was regarded as an integral but informal aspect of the supervisors' responsibilities. The way in which it was carried out varied from individual to individual. Some saw their role as providing the stability and discipline that was sometimes lacking in the trainees' home backgrounds. Often they took pride in being able to bring the trainees out of themselves. Other remained more aloof, but available to offer personal advice if asked. Finally, there were some who resented this role, stating that they were skilled craftsmen and not social workers. As was so with regard to the quality of training programmes, far more depended upon the character of individual supervisors than any formal requirements laid down either by the MSC or the scheme management.

In the case of the schemes offering New Training Places, the introduction of systems of profiling and reviewing was intended to give trainees the opportunity to become involved in negotiating and managing their own programmes of experience. At the ITEC, for example, the review process encouraged trainees to prove what they had learnt over the previous month and to negotiate a plan for the next month. Elsewhere, also, trainees were involved in reviewing their progress, though there was not always sufficient flexibility to allow meaningful negotiations about future plans.

7. Monitoring

Because of the larger capital sums involved in the schemes of this sector, the MSC gave a higher priority to the maintenance of regular monitoring visits than they did in the WEEP sector. In addition to a standard monitoring form that was similar to that used in the WEEP sector, a financial monitoring report form was also employed. Once again, it was the Area Link Officers of the Special Programmes Division who were responsible for making these visits. As was the case in the WEEP sector, the Careers Service was supposed to maintain contact with the trainees whilst they were on the schemes and to continue to advise them about job prospects.

In general, it appears that the MSC would make a monitoring visit to the schemes in this sector at least once every six months. The main concerns during these visits were with financial procedures, and with health and safety. The training content of the schemes does not appear to have been closely monitored, except during the visits from regional staff which were associated with the NTP upgrading process. Community Industry, although not a part of YOP, also received visits from the MSC, during which financial procedures were examined and it was checked that the unit was complying with the terms of its grant.

The Careers Service seems to have concentrated on keeping in regular contact with the larger schemes, including Community Industry. Amongst the smaller schemes contact was less regular, and in one case it was restricted to the sending of a list of vacancies every now and then.

Some schemes also received visits from local authority inspectors. The Training Workshop, in addition, was inspected for health and safety by trade union representatives.

8. End of Scheme

Community Industry and the larger YOP schemes which had been upgraded to New Training Place status offered trainees/employees programmes

of 12 months duration. Places on the two smaller YOP schemes were still only for six months. I was concerned to find out what happened to the young people when the various schemes came to an end.

At the Training Workshop and Community Project 1, between 35 and 40% of the trainees found jobs at the end of their programmes. At Community Industry the figure was nearer 50%. The ITEC had not yet had enough trainees pass through it for a meaningful figure to be given, and the other two schemes did not keep detailed figures. It is particularly interesting to note the comparative success of Community Industry in relation to the two larger YOP schemes. This might be thought surprising, given Community Industry's deliberate policy of selecting disadvantaged youngsters, and given its lack of concern with vocational training and the relation of work experience to the needs of the local labour market. The superior performance can probably be explained largely by the extra effort put into the placement of young people in permanent jobs at the end of their 12 month stay. Community Industry kept in very close contact with the Careers Service throughout the year, and when a young person's final 10th month review was due, they would invite a specialist careers adviser to attend. The Careers Service then made special efforts to find a suitable job for the young person concerned, and meanwhile Community Industry made use of the contacts with local industry that it had been able to build up over the years. Furthermore, if it was thought necessary, staff from the unit would accompany the young people to interviews. The YOP schemes also offered trainees the opportunity for careers counselling towards end of their programmes, but it did not appear to be as systematically organised, or as closely co-ordinated with the Careers Service. The fact that Community Industry employees were deemed to be particularly disadvantaged, in this instance, seemed to work to their advantage. However, the percentage success rate of Community Industry was probably also raised by the fact that those who were unable to find jobs were not automatically turned out of the scheme at the end of the 12 months. The decision depended upon the young person's individual situation, and, if it was thought that leaving would be particularly detrimental to them, there was enough flexibility to allow them to stay on for a further six months or so. At the YOP schemes, the 12 month maximum was more rigidly enforced.

Success, of course, can be measured by other criteria than job placement rates. Many of the staff that I spoke to referred to the remarkable transformations that they had witnessed in young people. In particular, how they had gained confidence in themselves and learnt to work together in a team. However, it was doubted that such improvements would be permanent if the youngsters went straight back on the dole afterwards. Concern was expressed that there was insufficient follow-up after the schemes. The Training Workshop was in fact trying to do something about this, by setting up an unemployed drop-in centre in a nearby derelict pub.

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The headings above duplicate those used to analyse the WEEP sector schemes. The headings below are different and are used to analyse some of the distinctive features of the schemes in this sector.

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9. Production for Sale

Schemes in this sector, unlike the various enterprises to which trainees were attached in the WEEP sector, were set up primarily with the purpose of providing opportunities for work experience and training. Nevertheless, some of them were expected to contribute to their running costs by marketing the goods and services that were produced by their trainees. The danger implicit in this situation was that one of these schemes, with its capital grant from the MSC and the free labour of the trainees, might be able to compete unfairly with local firms, causing a displacement of jobs. In order to avoid this danger it was explicitly stated that schemes should only produce goods and provide services which would not result in a loss of jobs elsewhere or compete unfairly with local firms. It was suggested that sub-contract work might be undertaken which for various reasons would be uneconomical for firms to undertake themselves, or that local authority sponsored schemes might produce goods for their own departments. Furthermore, in order to head off any allegations of under-

cutting or competing unfairly by using cheap labour, schemes were instructed to seek the general support of local industry and the trade unions for their activities.

The three largest YOP schemes - the Training Workshop, Community Project 1 and the ITEC - were all to some extent involved in selling their goods and services. Of the other two YOP schemes, the drama project did not charge for its performances, and the work of the fort restoration project was self-contained. Community Industry always worked on the basis that it provided the labour for free, while the people whom the work was being done for met the cost of the materials.

The most commercially orientated scheme was probably the Training Workshop. It has already been described how in the past the MSC had emphasised this side of its work, and how this had interfered with the development of the training function of the workshop. The main areas of commercial production were in upholstery and joinery. Markets had originally been identified by means of a market analysis survey, which had been carried out by a student for a small honorarium. These had subsequently been developed by means of advertising, canvassing and the exploitation of contacts made through a local community association. Such was the success of these efforts that at one time the problem became that of being overloaded with orders. Work was carried out for a wide variety of different customers - the City Council, the Polytechnic, PTAs, the YMCA, a local brewery and some other private concerns. Also there were certain standard items, such as bird tables, that were sold to the general public. A differential pricing policy was adopted which distinguished between certain categories of customer. The full commercial rate was charged to private customers; the cost of material plus 25% to community associations; and just the cost of materials to charities. Charging these rates, the Training Workshop had succeeded in making an overall profit of £7,000 on a turnover of £35,000 during its first fully operational year. But what of the danger of displacing jobs elsewhere? The manager assured me that they took great care to ensure that this did not happen. Most of the work that they took on would not have been done otherwise. For example,

they repaired furniture from the Polytechnic halls of residence, which otherwise would have been thrown out because the Polytechnic did not have the staff or facilities to do the repairs for themselves. Moreover, trade union and local industry representatives on the workshop's management committee oversaw all their activities. However, not all local trade unionists were convinced that the workshop did not pose a threat to their members' jobs. When the Portsmouth Trades Council was asked to approve the extension of the workshop at Paulsgrove, a number of misgivings were expressed about job displacement. Although eventually approval was given in response to appeals from a Paulsgrove Labour councillor, the reservations still remained. (66)

Community Projects were not encouraged to enter into commercial production to the same extent as Training Workshops. Nevertheless, Community Project 1 was involved in a number of commercial enterprises. I examined in particular the commercial activities of the materials bank and craft unit. This had started off purely as a warehousing and recycling operation. Industrial scrap materials that could be played with or used as teaching aids were collected from factories in the surrounding area, and warehoused on shelves at the unit's headquarters. Schools and playgroups were then invited to come in and collect whatever they wanted. The operation was made profitable by the institution of a subscription system. The fee varied from £8 per annum for a small playgroup to £25 per annum for a school. For this, they could help themselves to whatever they liked as often as they liked, the only limit being imposed by the amount of materials put out on the shelves. The scheme had proved very popular, and the number of member subscribers had risen to 170, 65 of which were paying at the maximum rate. Such was the demand in fact that they had been forced to limit the number of new subscriptions. Subsequently, a second line of business had been introduced - 'craft' products. This involved using off-cuts of material to make large toys such as Wendy Houses, telephones and postboxes. These were sold to subscribers at a cost of materials price, which was considerably below the standard commercial catalogue price for the equivalent item. For example, the catalogue price for a Wendy House was £70. A rough and ready equivalent that it took a trainee a month to make was sold by the unit for £17. Cheap

material such as chipboard and plywood were used, and the workmanship was not always of a particularly high standard. Nevertheless, the items were in demand from organisations who in an environment of financial restraint could no longer afford to pay for the real thing. A third line of business which was just being developed at the time of my visit was that of bulk purchasing. Play materials such as crayons and balloons were bought in bulk and then sold at a 10% mark-up, which was still considerably cheaper than if the playgroups had attempted to buy the same items individually for themselves. The same doubts about the effects of these activities on jobs elsewhere can be raised as in the case of the Training Workshop. Again, I was assured that trade union approval had been sought, and that there was no danger of job displacement taking place. However, it would be difficult to discount the possibility altogether. Thus it may have been the case that if some playschemes had not bought certain items of equipment from the materials bank and craft unit, they would not have been able to purchase such equipment at all. But it would be unlikely that this would always be the case, and if it was not, then the unit was effectively undercutting some other business and possibly putting jobs at risk.

ITECs, like Training Workshops, were encouraged by the MSC to enter into commercial production. This had been one of the features of the original Nottingdale ITEC, and in the terms of reference of subsequent ITECs it was stated that, "in order to create a realistic working environment", they should "develop, produce and sell new technology items."⁽⁶⁷⁾ In fact, the Portsmouth ITEC had very little involvement with commercial activities, apart from collecting a small revenue for the use of certain services, such as those provided by its Prestel equipment. The reason for this, as explained by the manager, was precisely the fear of causing a displacement of jobs in the local labour market. Locally there were a mass of small firms that had grown up to supply the component needs of the high technology giants such as IBM and Plessey. If the ITEC were to use its resources to enter into the local market, the danger would be that it might put one of these smaller firms out of business. Rather than risk this, the manager thought that it was preferable that the ITEC should concentrate on the development of ideas rather than their marketing.

It could then feed these ideas out into local industry, along with the trained youngsters, thereby acting as a support rather than a competitor. In other areas, where new technology industries were not so highly developed, the manager thought that the situation might be different, and that it might be possible for an ITEC to exploit a gap in the market without threatening someone else's business. The interesting point here is that the same features of the local labour market that made Portsmouth a suitable location for the training function of the ITEC, made it unsuitable for the commercial function. This highlights a more general paradox that affects production for sale in any training scheme. If the trainees are being trained in skills for which there is a well developed local labour market, then if they use these skills for commercial production, there is always the danger that they will be undermining the permanent jobs which they hope eventually to obtain. If, on the other hand, the trainees commercial activity does not compete with that of any local industry, then the chances are that the skills which they are developing will not be in demand locally.

The danger of job displacement does not in fact only arise from commercial production. Community Industry did not attempt to make any revenue from its projects, but still the problem of displacement arose. Although most of the work that the unit undertook was for churches, charitable organisations and other such 'good causes', it also undertook work for local authorities. Thus at Fareham it had undertaken a quite major land reclamation scheme on behalf of the Borough Council. This, it was argued, would not have otherwise been done. However, the trade unions at Portsmouth City Council, with their members already being made redundant, were highly suspicious of such arguments. Fearing that Community Industry might be used to undermine more of their members' jobs, they had vetoed its working for the City Council. Even the work that Community Industry (and equally YOP Community Projects) undertook on behalf of good causes such as churches can be questioned on grounds of job displacement. Community Industry and Community Project 1 had between them carried out repairs and renovation work on quite a number of churches in the local area. But it must be asked what would have happened if these schemes had

not existed? Can it really be said that the work would not have otherwise been done? Something would have had to be done eventually or the churches would have started crumbling around their congregations' ears. It is possible that the work would have been done through the voluntary efforts of local parishioners. But in this case it might be asked why the youngsters should be expected to save them the trouble, when probably they live in other parishes and have no interest in churches anyway. The only other possibility would seem to be that of raising the necessary money to hire professional builders and decorators. If this were the case, the scheme concerned would be taking away work from local firms, and possibly helping to destroy the jobs in which the young people might otherwise be employed.

10. Staff Recruitment and Training

Unlike in the WEEP sector, schemes in this sector were responsible for the employment of specialist staff who were concerned exclusively with the management and supervision of YOP trainees. The importance of staff recruitment and training has already been underlined by the observation made above that the quality of the work experience and training provision on these schemes was crucially dependent upon the capacity of individual supervisors. Thus I was particularly interested to establish how the supervisory staff were recruited and what training they received. General regulations concerning the staffing of schemes were set out by the MSC in their guide to sponsors.⁽⁶⁸⁾ The overall staff/trainee ratio was not allowed to exceed that of one member of staff to five trainees. The direct supervisor/trainee ratio was expected to be about one supervisor to eight trainees. All members of staff had to be recruited from the unemployment register, and technical officers from the MSC Area Office were involved in the selection processes for both managerial and supervisory posts. Between them, the management and supervision team were expected to have a collective blend of experience and skills covering a wide range of areas. In particular, the supervisory staff were expected to have a wide industrial experience combined with the ability to get on with young people. Those employed were to be paid salaries or wages "at the appropriate local negotiated rate, according to their qualifications, experience

and the level of responsibility of the post", (69) up to a certain maximum laid down for that level of responsibility by the MSC. All supervisors were to attend a basic training course in supervision, including instructional techniques and guidance.

Most of the YOP schemes that I visited recruited supervisors primarily on the basis of their knowledge and experience of certain industrial or commercial skills. The case of the drama project was slightly different in that it required qualified and experienced drama teachers. At the other schemes some experience of working with young people was regarded as an advantage; and, with the upgrading to New Training Places, a background in training was increasingly being sought after. However, some schemes seemed to have found it difficult to obtain the kind of staff that they wanted, and there was a certain amount of resentment expressed about the restriction of having to recruit from the unemployment register. In one case, apparently, this restriction had been bypassed. The ITEC, of course, was not hampered by such restrictions, and with the help of its extra grant from the Department of Industry was able to offer salaries considerably above the MSC maximum. Furthermore, we have seen that it was also the beneficiary of secondments from local industry. With these advantages, it was possible to put together a well-balanced team, all except one of which had previous training experience. Neither was Community Industry restricted by the necessity of having to recruit from the unemployment register. Otherwise its criteria for selecting supervisors were similar to those of the other YOP schemes, except that more emphasis was placed on the need for the applicant to be able to counsel young people on personal and social problems. They were not merely to be work supervisors, but 'scheme consultants', a title that was meant also to imply a caring role.

The provision of training for YOP scheme staff was organised at the regional level of the MSC Special Programmes Division (subsequently Training Division), by the Regional Training Resources Manager. Thus staff training for the whole of the South East Region was organised from the regional headquarters at Basingstoke. As described above in

Chapter 5, there were three tiers of training available. Tier I, it will be remembered, was an induction training course designed to introduce new staff to the Programme and to their role within it. This was mandatory for all supervisors. Tier II embraced a number of courses concerned with job skills development. All supervisory staff were eligible to attend, but it was compulsory only for Training Workshop supervisors. Finally, Tier III consisted of various kinds of specialist training designed to respond to particular staff needs. Once again all staff were eligible, but it was not compulsory for any of them and, unlike with Tiers I and II, the costs had to be met from within the scheme's operating budget.

At the two larger YOP schemes all the supervisors had been on Tiers I and II. At the Training Workshop, some supervisors had received additional first aid and health and safety training, and certain of the senior supervisors and management had been on Tier II(b). Furthermore, staff training had been stepped up in line with the NTP upgrading process: eight supervisors were in the process of taking a one year Further Education Teaching Certificate, and three more were taking courses under the MSC Tier III. Similarly, at Community Project 1, some of the supervisors had taken additional first aid or commercial courses, and some had gone on a Tier III course. Also the project had organised some of its own 'in company, made-to-measure training' to deal with the particular needs of its staff. At the ITEC, it was only thought necessary for the member of staff who did not have any previous training experience to go on any of the MSC courses. Similarly, at the Drama Project, it was thought a waste of time for trained teachers to attend. At the other Community Project, previous supervisors had been on Tiers I and II, but those there at the time of my visit were still waiting for their training. In contrast to the prevalent attitude in YOP, Community Industry did not believe that it was necessary for its scheme consultants to have any special training beyond first aid and health and safety. The view expressed was that the skills involved could not be taught formally, but had to be developed through experience, supported by the guidance of senior staff and the exchange of ideas at staff meetings. This was consistent

with the wider Community Industry philosophy which emphasised the informal development of working relationships as opposed to formal vocational training.

The average supervisor that I met on my visits was a man aged between 40 and 55, who had some kind of apprentice or craft training, often with a background in the Dockyard or the Navy. Some had previous experience of having apprentices or trainees under them, and in particular there were a number of professional instructors at the Training Workshop who had come from the Dockyard Apprentice Training Centre which had recently been closed down. Overall there was a wide range of skill and training experience - from the semi-skilled 'jack of all trades' handyman, to the retired chef who had previously been in charge of catering training at a large naval shore establishment. The supervisors at the ITEC and the Drama Project were of a different nature again, being for the most part professionally trained rather than craft trained. Finally, at Community Industry, I observed that the scheme consultants tended to be somewhat rougher and tougher characters than the average YOP supervisor, though probably lacking the same degree of technical skill.

The YOP supervisors that I met expressed a wide variety of opinions on the MSC training that they had attended. Some thought that the training as a whole had been very useful, others that it had been a waste of time. Some thought that Tier I had been interesting, but that Tier II had been boring; others thought the reverse. What became evident was that reactions were largely dependent upon the supervisors' previous experiences. What for some was 'old hat', for others was vitally useful information. The problem faced by the MSC's regional training staff was that of organising courses that were capable of meeting the individual needs of people with such a wide variety of previous experiences. Clearly they were not altogether successful.

A cause of widespread complaint amongst YOP supervisors at the time of my visits was the increase in their responsibilities that was being demanded by the upgrading to New Training Places and the transition to YTS. The exact nature of the complaint varied. Some supervisors

resented the change itself. A typical statement was this: "I'm a skilled painter and decorator, and I was employed to supervise trainees painting and decorating. I am not a lecturer, and I am not a social worker, and I didn't come here to fill in forms." Others were more accepting of the change, but did not think that they were being adequately prepared for it. Although staff training was being adapted to the needs of YTS, most of the attention was being given to the new staff. For those who had already been through Tiers I and II, there were as yet few opportunities for refresher training being provided by the MSC. Finally, there was the complaint that they were not receiving adequate recognition for their new role. This was given strong expression at the local scheme managers' meeting that I attended. Although YTS was supposed to provide a much higher quality of training than YOP, there was to be no increase of staff trainee ratios, and no upgrading of staff status or rates of pay. Thus they were being expected to fulfil a far more complex and demanding 'high quality training' role, with the same number of trainees and at the same level of remuneration as before when they were mere supervisors. Their wage rates were worked out on the basis of local authority basic non-manual rates of pay, and this basis of comparison was not being changed, despite the change in their job description. As a result they considered themselves to be grossly underpaid compared with trainers in further education who were paid according to the Burnham Scale. A further issue was that of job security. As a scheme manager at the meeting which I attended explained, he had to advise his staff that their jobs were only temporary and that they should continue looking for more permanent employment. Because of the annual uncertainty about the continued funding of the scheme, they could only be offered one year contracts, and it was sometimes only three weeks before these contracts were due to expire that they were informed whether or not their jobs would be continuing. In these circumstances, he asked, how could the staff be expected to concentrate on the introduction of long-term plans for a permanent high quality training scheme. In short, the complaint was that there was nothing in YTS for the staff. Given the previous observation that

the quality of YOP schemes in this sector was in general very dependent upon the quality, experience and motivation of individual supervisors, this did not augur well for the future development of this sector of YTS as high quality training provision.

11. Trainee Representation

Given that these schemes were set up specifically for the purpose of providing work experience and training for young people, I was interested to find out what arrangements had been made for the representation of the interests of the trainees in their management. I was also concerned to establish what role, if any, the trade unions had played in the organisation of young people at these schemes.

The two largest YOP schemes had both made semi-formal arrangements for the self-representation of trainees. At the Training Workshop a trainees' committee had been established. Points arising from the minutes of this committee were taken up to the management committee of the workshop by a trainee representative. However, this never seems to have been much more than a token arrangement, the issues raised remaining at the level of demands for soft toilet paper and such like. Moreover, the committee's existence depended on the enthusiasm of a few individuals, and when they left the Training Workshop, the arrangements for the committee fell into disuse. The only other trainee contribution to the management of the Training Workshop was as health and safety representatives. Each section appointed a trainee health and safety representative whose task it was to report on any hazards in other sections. The scheme was run on a competitive basis between the sections. While this may have been a useful device for teaching the trainees about health and safety, it cannot be said to have given them much real influence over their working environment. At Community Project 1 the situation was much the same. Each worksite had a trainee project leader who was appointed according to a system of rotation. These project leaders would attend trainee meetings, from which matters could be taken up to the management. The

kind of issues raised were of a kind with those at the Training Workshop: for example, there was a demand that trainees working in the canteen should not have to wear white overalls. In addition, there was a standard grievance procedure through which individual trainees could take up complaints. At the smaller YOP schemes, trainees were sometimes consulted informally about the work that they were doing, but there were no formal arrangements for trainee representation. Neither were there any at the Community Industry Unit.

As was the case in the WEEP sector, at none of the schemes had there been any significant trade union impact. Some attempts had been made to recruit trainees at both of the two larger YOP schemes, but only a very small number had joined. Apparently, even a token levy of 10p a week was enough to put trainees off. The most persistent attempts at recruitment had been made at Community Project 1, where NUPE, the TGWU and the Labour Party Young Socialists all made approaches to the trainees. The scheme manager was quite willing to allow these organisations access, his view being that the trainees were adults and should be allowed to find out about things for themselves. A group of about a dozen trainees were given time off to go on a day trip to London organised by NUPE so that they could lobby Parliament on behalf of the Jobs For Youth Campaign. However, it was the manager's observation that the trade union representatives had difficulty communicating with the trainees, and that the small number which they were able to attract soon became disillusioned. Other managers were more defensive. They regarded the trainees as being too young to join a union, and thought that it might be detrimental to their chances of finding permanent employment. There was particular apprehension about the trade unions' political role in relation to the trainees. Such managerial attitudes, combined with trainee apathy and union ineffectiveness, ensured that there was negligible trade union influence at the other schemes.

General Impressions

As in the WEEP sector, there was considerable variety and each scheme that I visited had a distinct character. Nevertheless, there were also

certain interesting similarities. The three larger schemes, the Training Workshop, Community Project 1 and Community Industry, had the most in common. This was true despite the fact that the Training Workshop and Community Project 1 were in separate categories of YOP, and Community Industry was not a part of YOP at all. The similarity did not depend merely upon size. As has been noted, there was a considerable overlap in the range of work experience offered by these three schemes. Also there was an overlap in the kind of young people recruited, albeit that in the case of Community Industry there was a positive policy to select those who were most disadvantaged, whereas in the case of the other two schemes it was a question of their being left with those not wanted by the WEEP sponsors. Finally, as far as quality was concerned, the range between sections or groups within each scheme was probably larger than between the schemes taken as a whole.

Of the smaller schemes, Community Project 3 (the renovation project), was the most similar in character to the three larger schemes. It recruited a similar kind of trainee, it provided typical construction orientated work experience, and although it had not been upgraded to New Training Place status, its quality was at least on a par with the average to be found on the larger schemes. Community Project 2, the drama project, had a different ethos which reflected the fact that it was an education based scheme. Its character was more like certain college-based off-the-job training than it was like any of the other schemes in this sector. Although no formal qualifications were required, it attracted trainees with a much higher average level of qualifications than any other scheme. Furthermore, the theatrical work experience was unlike that provided in any other scheme. Given that it was so different in these other respects, it would be almost impossible to assess its quality in relation to the other schemes. Finally, the ITEC was different again. It stood out as a prestige scheme which enjoyed special funding status. Although it did not necessarily select the trainees with the best qualifications, it only took on those who were well-motivated. The content of the scheme was more like a formal training course than was the case in any of the other schemes. Given such advantages, it could aspire to a level of quality that was beyond the reach of the rest of this sector.

Leaving aside for the moment the drama scheme, what is interesting to note here is the different positions of Community Industry and the ITEC in relation to the rest of the schemes in this sector. Although Community Industry was not a part of YOP, in most respects it was closer to the rest of the provision in this sector than was the ITEC. This is significant, given that Community Industry claimed to embody a distinctly different approach to work experience and training from YOP in general.

It will be remembered that the Community Industry approach gave primary emphasis to work experience as a medium for personal and social development. The acquisition of vocational skills was very much a secondary consideration. As a result, no special effort was made to relate the range of work experience to the needs of the local labour market. What was provided was what was easiest and cheapest to set up, and this often depended upon the availability of staff and the requirements of the local community. No attempt was made to include systematic vocational training or to ensure that employees had the opportunity to sample a wide range of work experience. The crucial element of content was the social unit of the group working together under the supervision of an adult. The development of relationships within the group was regarded as far more important than the vocational content of the work experience that they happened to be carrying out.

The YOP schemes in this sector, compared to those in the WEEP sector, tended to follow more closely the formal elements of content that were laid down by the MSC. However, beneath these formal elements of content, the reality of what was taking place tended to converge with the theory and practice of Community Industry. This was particularly so before the upgrading process to New Training Place status. The range of work experience offered had not been considered systematically in relation to the local labour market. The fact that in many cases it overlapped closely with that offered by Community Industry, suggested that the same factors of choice had predominated. Nor had the trainees always been systematically rotated through a range of

different work experience, and often the training content had been sparse. Under these circumstances, the nature of the experience, and the benefits that trainees might derive from it, came closer to the Community Industry model than to a vocational training model.

Obviously, the intention of the New Training Place upgrading process was to change this situation by reorganising the content of the schemes by means of the Basic Skills Checklist into systematic programmes which integrated a range of work experience and formal training content. At the time of my visits, the two larger YOP schemes had already been through the upgrading process and were completing the implementation of the changes. What was evident was that these changes were encountering resistance amongst both trainees and supervisors. Trainees did not like being moved around from one area to another. Supervisors were reluctant to take on the extra responsibilities of formal training and assessment based on complicated skills checklists. Thus, it seemed that these schemes still had a certain natural affinity with the Community Industry approach.

The ITEC stood apart from the other schemes in this sector by virtue of the extent to which it was able to realise the objective of a systematic programme which integrated work experience and formal training content. A number of factors can be brought forward as explanations for this comparative success. First, the ITEC had not needed to go through the upgrading process; from the beginning it had been set up to offer places of NTP status. Secondly, it had been able to select well-motivated trainees who were likely to be able to adopt a more flexible approach to a varied programme. But most important was the privileged status that it enjoyed with regard to both capital and staffing resources. This stemmed principally from the extra funding that it received from the Department of Industry, but also from the support that it was given as a prestige project by the local council and by local industry. The extra money made it possible to buy the modern equipment that was necessary to train young people for such a new and expanding industry. Moreover, without the restriction of having to recruit from the unemployment register, it

made it possible to attract staff who had marketable skills and relevant training experience.

If it is concluded that the difference between the ITEC and the other YOP schemes in this sector was primarily the result of the additional resources available to the ITEC, the implication must be drawn that the quality and relevance of the ITEC's provision could not have been reproduced elsewhere without its privileged funding status being generalised throughout the sector. Thus, the position of the ITEC highlighted the limitations of the other schemes. They did not have the resources to purchase modern equipment, and nor were they likely to be able to recruit staff with marketable skills and training experience. For the most part they were a ghetto, where rejected trainees were catered for by redundant staff using old equipment in old buildings. Under such unfavourable circumstances, commendable efforts were made. Yet, it must be questioned how realistic it was to aspire beyond the Community Industry model of what could be achieved in these circumstances, towards the kind of high quality training programme that the ITEC was able to offer. The problem was illustrated graphically at the scheme managers' meeting which I attended concerned with the transition to YTS. With the same staff working under the same conditions, with little extra training or resources, these schemes were apparently expected to transform themselves onto a new level of high quality training provision. Somehow, a series of visits from the Regional Quality Improvement team, armed with a Basic Skills Checklist and Trainee Centred Reviewing, were supposed to enable these schemes to transcend the limitations that were inherent in the conditions under which they were being expected to operate.

Before concluding the impressions on this sector, a separate note needs to be added on the drama scheme which thus far has been left out of consideration. It stood apart from the rest of the schemes in this sector as an education based provision. Its strength lay in what could be described as its social and life skills content. Also it should be said that it was providing a useful service for schools in the local community. The problem was that it lacked any realistic voca-

tional content. Most of the trainees whom I asked said that they were hoping to pursue a theatrical career. Yet, there did not appear to be any opportunities for them to be able to progress on such a career at the end of the scheme. Arguably, then, the scheme was leading well-qualified trainees down an occupational blind alley. Without a realistic vocational content, the future of this scheme under YTS was in some doubt, though no decision had been made at the time.

Summing up, the inherent problems of this sector can be considered in relation to those of the WEEP sector. The fundamental problem underlying WEEP provision was that of substitution; not merely in the narrow sense of YOP trainees being used to substitute for permanent employees, but in the wider sense of there being an inherent tendency for this form of provision to take the place of what employers might have offered on their own initiative and at their own expense. For the non-WEEP schemes, the problem was in a sense the opposite, not one of substitution, but one of addition. Because they genuinely were additional provision, they were inherently more expensive. If the money had been available to provide modern equipment and to recruit staff with marketable skills, then it might as well have been spent on creating real jobs. As it was, such resources could only be made available for the odd showpiece, like the ITEC. Elsewhere, it was a case of making do with the left-overs from the real economy in a marginalised and artificial setting. Of course, production for sale offered some schemes the opportunity to supplement their resources and to enhance the realism of the work experience that they provided. However, insofar as the work became real, the same problems began to emerge as those that were inherent within the WEEP sector. The trainees on these schemes could not be substituted for permanent employees, but there was always the danger that their productive work could contribute to the displacement of jobs elsewhere. Thus, non-WEEP and WEEP schemes together were caught between the twin evils of artificial additionality and real substitution.

C Training Courses

In the final year of the Youth Opportunities Programme, there was a major expansion of the number of places available in this sector of provision. Previously, the number of trainees on training courses had not exceeded 300, and this had constituted only about 13% of the total number for South East Hampshire. However, by October 1982, the number had risen to over 700, constituting approximately 26% of the total number of trainees on the Programme in the area. This doubling of training course provision was associated with the introduction of New Training Places at the beginning of this final year of YOP. Thus, approximately 60% of the total number of New Training Places available were provided in this sector.

There were three main types of course available. First, there were the 12 month Work Skills Courses which provided the 450 or so New Training Places in this sector. These were new courses which were being introduced for the first time. Generally they consisted of six months of formal training at a specialised training establishment, and six months work experience at an industrial or commercial placement. Secondly, there were the 13 week Short Training Courses, which had always been a part of YOP and until this final year had provided the vast majority of places in this sector. With the introduction of Work Skills Courses, the number of trainees on these courses had been reduced to approximately 200. Finally, there were a small number of Work Introduction Courses which aimed to provide disadvantaged and low achieving young people with a sheltered introduction to the world of work. These were usually 13 weeks long, though there were some courses which lasted six months or a year and were included as Work Skills Courses. In all, approximately 50 Work Introduction Course places were offered at any one time.

These different types of courses covered a wide variety of vocational areas. The pattern of distribution was to a certain extent influenced by the type of course. Thus, amongst Work Skills Courses, the main concentrations of places were as follows: 35% in Engineering, 12% in Construction, and 12% in Motor Vehicle Repair. Whereas, amongst the Short Training Courses, 30% of places were in Construction, 25% in

Office Skills and 22% in Engineering. Work Introduction Courses were different in that they did not concentrate on any particular vocational area, but aimed to offer a wide range of sampling. In contrast to the occupational distribution of WEEP schemes, the overall bias of the vocational courses in this sector of provision appears to have been towards the declining traditional manufacturing and construction industries, rather than the newer service industries. Having said this, it should be remembered that there was evidence of Construction holding up as a source of employment for school leavers far better than its overall position in the local labour market might suggest. But this was not the case with Engineering, and yet it was the vocational area with the largest concentration of the new high quality Work Skills Courses.

The majority of these courses were provided by the four further education colleges located within the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area. Thus 18 out of 22 Work Skills Courses were college-based, as were 60% of places on Short Training Courses and all the Work Introduction Courses. The rest were provided by a variety of private training organisations. The six visits that I made within this sector included three out of four of the local colleges and three other training organisations. Between them, these institutions provided approximately 90% of the sector's places. However, it should be pointed out that often I was only able to examine a sample of the provision available within a particular institution.

During my visits I followed a standard list of questions, similar to those that I used in the other two sectors, but adapted to the specificity of this sector. In addition to questions concerned with the training courses provided within this sector, where appropriate, I included questions about the off-the-job training that was provided on behalf of schemes in the other two sectors. Having already examined this provision from the angle of the work experience schemes with which it was associated, I thought it necessary to provide the balance of a second analysis from the angle of the institutions in which it was provided. This analysis is written up within the separate section D.

1. Background

I collected certain background information about each of the institutions that I visited, and about the history and development of YOP provision within it. Once again, I have summarised this information in a series of brief character sketches.

a) College 1

This was a large, well-established college situated on the outskirts of Portsmouth. It had close contacts with local industry, and a strong reputation for high level training in traditional skill areas, such as construction and engineering. Its involvement with YOP provision went back to September 1979, when a Short Training Course in Construction had been established. This had run continuously ever since, offering up to 30 places three times a year. However, it was not until September 1982 that there was any further expansion of YOP provision. At this point eight new Work Skills Courses were introduced, as it was thought, in preparation for the Youth Training Scheme. These new courses were as follows: Road Motor Vehicle Servicing (RTITB); Construction (Vocational Preparation Scheme); Leisure and Caring Services; Repair and Maintenance of Hotel, Catering and Public Building Services; Business Studies; Introduction to Engineering; Vocational Preparation Training in the Construction Industry; and MSC/TEC Foundation Course in Engineering. This brought the total number of YOP places on offer at the college up to about 135. But this was still insignificant in relation to the total capacity of the college. Another recent development had been the introduction of off-the-job training in brick-laying for a small number of trainees from work experience schemes in the construction industry. Previously, the college had not involved itself in the provision of off-the-job training for other YOP schemes.

b) College 2

This was a modern purpose-built college located just outside Portsmouth. It had been involved in running what were referred to as 'Gateway

Courses' for the young unemployed since 1975. These had been 13 week courses in either Engineering or Office Skills. Another important pre-YOP experience had been the running of a Unified Vocational Preparation Course for employed youngsters. The development of this course had been very successful in its own terms, but it had failed to attract sufficient support from local employers and therefore had not been continued. With the introduction of YOP, the Gateway Courses were re-labelled as Short Training Courses, but continued much as before. Each of them offered up to 30 places three times a year. In addition, a Work Introduction Course was introduced, offering up to 12 places three times a year. Subsequently, in 1981-82, another Short Training Course was developed which offered training in what was referred to as Personal Services. In September 1982, two new Work Skills Courses were established, one in Engineering and the other in Personal Services. However, this did not constitute a major expansion of provision. Although all the existing Short Training Courses continued to run, the number of places was reduced on those covering the same areas as the new Work Skills Courses. At the same time, the length of the Work Introduction Course was extended from 13 to 26 weeks, but the throughput was reduced from 36 to 24 trainees a year. Altogether, at the beginning of this final year, the college was offering about 115 places on these various YOP training courses. Once again, this was not a very large figure in relation to the total provision of the college. In addition to these college-based training courses, for a number of years it had provided a small amount of day release off-the-job training for local work experience schemes. Two groups of 12 trainees each were catered for per term. Finally, it should be noted that this college was also involved in YOP as a WEEP sponsor, offering four places, two in the Engineering Department and two in the Office.

c) College 3

This college, which was located in the centre of Portsmouth, regarded itself as the 'different college'. Its original and principal function was as an art and design school, teaching courses up to

degree standard. However, since 1976, it had been developing a secondary function as a community college providing various forms of continuing education. From the very beginning, the provision of courses for the young unemployed had developed as an important aspect of this secondary function. First, in September 1976, the college had established a short course in Painting and Decorating. This was followed in 1977 by the development of a Work Introduction Course. With the formal introduction of YOP in 1978, the college diversified its provision of Short Training Courses so as to include both Office Skills and Retailing, in addition to Painting and Decorating. These Short Training Courses, together with the Work Introduction Course continued to offer between 60 and 70 places per term throughout the history of the Programme. In September 1982 this provision was added to by the introduction of four new Work Skills Courses. Three of these were run by the College on behalf of a private training organisation which had set itself up as a pilot managing agency for the Youth Training Scheme. These courses were as follows: Front Office/ Reception; Recreation/ Leisure/ Tourism; and Distribution/ Warehousing. The fourth Work Skills Course, which was the sole responsibility of the college, was in Craft, Design and Technology. The addition of these four new courses brought the college's capacity up to about 125 YOP trainees at any one time. Also during this final year, the Work Introduction Course was extended to offer places of either six months' or a year's duration. The college had also been involved from the beginning of YOP in the provision of off-the-job training in social and life skills for work experience trainees. This was originally organised on the basis of day release, but after about a year a system of block release was introduced. The capacity rose from about 120 trainees per annum in 1980/81 to a potential throughput of between 5-600 trainees in 1982/83. Finally it should be mentioned that this was the college that in February 1983 was responsible for setting up the Group WEEP scheme that has already been described above. Overall, YOP work constituted approximately 20% of the provision of the college, and as such was of more significance than in the other two colleges. The revenue thus gained from the MSC was regarded as particularly important to the development of the community college side of its work.

d) The Apprentice Training Centre

This was a Shipbuilding Apprentice Training Centre situated just outside Portsmouth. The demand for apprentices had been declining over recent years and it had introduced YOP training courses in order to make use of its spare capacity. This started in 1980 with the provision of Short Training Courses in Pipework and Joinery. In September 1982 a Work Skills Course was introduced in Engineering Practical Skills. This catered for 60 trainees in addition to the 36 on Short Training Courses. The apprentice intake for this year was 53, compared with 140 in 1979. Thus in a period of just three years YOP training had taken over two-thirds of the Centre's capacity.

e) The Skillcentre

This was an MSC Skillcentre located in Portsmouth. Its principal function was to provide TOPs courses for adult trainees. These were offered in 17 different trades: seven in engineering, five in automotive servicing and repairs, three in electronics, one in construction and bricklaying, and one in gents hairdressing. Most of these were 26 weeks long and were run off a staggered entry. The total capacity of the Centre was for approximately 200 trainees. Its involvement with YOP courses had begun in autumn 1981, when a number of 13 week Short Training Courses were set up. These were provided for on the basis of infilling the existing TOPs courses. A trade union agreement allowed for two YOP trainees to be infilled into each TOPs section. The Short Training Courses were then made up of between one and three sections, with the pairs of trainees being alternated between sections in the multiple section courses. The courses provided were as follows: Engineering and Machine Operative; Refrigeration; Motor Vehicle Servicing; Motor Body Repair and Spraying; Construction; and Gas and Electric Arc Welding. These offered 26 places in all. In September 1982, two Work Skills Courses were introduced. The first of these was a course in Road Motor Vehicle Servicing which the Centre ran as an agent on behalf of the Road Transport ITB. This offered three places, doubled up to six by alternation with work experience placements. The second was a Mechanical Engineering course of their own design which

offered eight places, doubled up to 16 by alternationa. Finally the Skillcentre offered a unique form of YOP course referred to as a Training Experience Course. This was a special 10 week course of job sampling for trainees who were proving difficult to fit into other training opportunities. It provided 10 places for trainees who were infilled into different sections on a flexible week-to-week basis. Altogether, the three different types of courses were catering for between 50 and 60 YOP trainees. This represented between 25 and 30% of the capacity of the Skillcentre.

f) The Engineering Training Association

This was an association of some 50 engineering companies in the Portsmouth area that had been set up to service the training needs of its members. As well as providing advice for its members and organising courses for their employees, it also ran a Training Centre on the outskirts of Portsmouth which catered almost exclusively for the young unemployed. This had been set up in 1977 in response to a request from the Engineering ITB, and originally it ran a machine operating course under the aegis of that organisation. With the introduction of YOP, this course had been taken over by the MSC as a 15 week Short Training Course. Subsequently, in 1981, a second electronically based Short Training Course had been introduced. Then, in September 1982, a Foundation in Electronics and Engineering Work Skills Course was launched, which combined the contents of the two Short Training Courses. The three courses had a combined capacity for between 45 and 50 trainees.

2. Recruitment and Selection

By the time that I was making my case study visits the Special Programmes Division and the Training Services Division of the MSC had been merged into a single Training Division. However before this took place in December 1982, although it was the Special Programmes Division that was responsible for the management of YOP as a whole, it was the Training Services Division that directly administered the training course sector of YOP provision. Its role in recruitment

and selection was more active than that of the Special Programmes Division in the case of work experience schemes. The formal system was as follows. The Training Services Division would first approve a course and then send relevant details of it to the local Careers Service (and Jobcentres). The Careers Service would then recruit suitable candidates bearing in mind any selection criteria that might have been stipulated for the course. These pre-selected candidates would then be sent for a final selection interview at the training establishment where the course was to be run. Generally representatives of both the Careers Service and the Training Services Division would attend these interviews, as well as members of staff at the training establishment.

Within the bounds of this formal system, I found that there was a considerable variation of practices from course to course. The most significant differences were between the three main types of courses rather than the different institutions that were running them.

Work Skills Courses were in general the most selective in their recruitment practices. As well as a high level of motivation, often certain minimum academic levels of achievement in relevant subjects were stipulated as requirements for pre-selection. For example, the MSC/TEC Foundation in Engineering Work Skills Course at College 1 specified that applicants would need a minimum of CSE grade 3 in Mathematics, a suitable science subject, and English Language or a non-technical subject requiring English as a means of communication. Generally, CSE grade 3 was the minimum level required. Notice was also taken of results obtained in a locally administered engineering grading test, which originally had been set up to assist companies in the selection of their apprentices, and which was taken as a matter of course by many young people in the area during their last year of school. Thus, for example, the Skillcentre was looking for grades A-C for its Work Skills Course in Mechanical Engineering; grade A being 'technician level', grade B 'upper craft level', and grade C 'craft level'. Up to twice as many applicants as the number of places available would be pre-selected by the Careers Service to go for

interview. As well as the actual interview, applicants were often expected to undergo various aptitude tests. Thus, for the Road Transport ITB's Road Motor Vehicle Servicing Work Skills Course which was run at both the Skillcentre and at College 1, applicants were not only interviewed but were tested in simple arithmetic, mechanical skills and I.Q. In general, those selected were those who showed the greatest ability - often young people who previously might have expected to get an apprenticeship. Work Skills Courses were regarded as high quality provision, and as such, for the most part they were reserved for the higher ability trainees. There were however exceptions, like the Personal Services Work Skills Course at College 2, which required of applicants nothing more than motivation towards employment in community care or the service industries.

In contrast to most Work Skills Courses, Short Training Courses generally asked for minimal formal requirements and were prepared to accept almost any candidate sent by the Careers Service. In some cases the basic ability to read was required, and this was assessed by means of a simple test. At the Engineering Training Association, all candidates had to take the engineering grading test and a minimum grade D (lower craft level) was made a requirement for safety reasons. Elsewhere, the line was drawn above ESN level. However, the Construction course at College 1 regularly offered two places to ESN-M trainees. Thus, Short Training Courses were in general far more open than Work Skills Courses. Indeed, some of the training staff that I spoke to were of the opinion that the most fundamental difference between the two types of course was not in their length or their content, but in the type of trainee that they recruited.

Work Introduction Courses were different again, insofar as they deliberately sought to attract low achievers and the disadvantaged, young people lacking motivation and with little understanding of the world of work. Thus, in the case of the Work Introduction Course at College 2, three or four ESN-M trainees were included on each 12 place course. For this particular course, the Careers Service pre-

selected about 25 suitable candidates who they thought might benefit from it. These young people were then invited to a half-day open day which included an interview. The emphasis in selection was put on them choosing the course and wanting to do it.

One feature that was common to the recruitment for both Work Skills Courses and Short Training Courses was sexual stereotyping. Only very occasionally did I come across a girl on an engineering or a construction course, or a boy on an office skills course. The explanation usually given was that only the members of one sex had expressed any interest in the particular course to the Careers Service. However there was one kind of course, the Personal Services Short Training Courses and Work Skills Course at College 2, which had been designed specifically with girls in mind. This had led to certain protests from feminists at the college, and, with some reluctance, the courses had been opened up to boys as well. However, very few boys had wanted to go on such courses, and those that did, had experienced difficulties in fitting in. In the case of Work Introduction Courses, sexual stereotyping of recruitment did not so much apply, since these courses were not directed to a particular area of vocational training, but to a particular level of ability and motivation amongst the trainees.

A final feature that ought to be noted is the difficulty that some institutions were experiencing in filling their courses. During my visits, certain of the training staff complained that the Careers Service were not sending them enough recruits to be able to maintain the numbers on their courses. This particularly applied to Short Training Courses which were being refilled for the second and third time that year. The Engineering Training Association had bypassed the Careers Service and successfully mounted its own advertising in order to attract sufficient trainees. Elsewhere the opinion was expressed that the Careers Service were not doing enough to keep in contact with the young unemployed and to attract them onto the provision that was available. However, this may have been a temporary problem resulting from the upheaval of the transition to 12 month training programmes under the Youth Training Scheme.

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In the same way as the MSC Guidelines established the four main components of scheme content for the two work experience sectors, they did so for this sector. However, the headings were not exactly the same as those in the work experience sectors, and there were certain variations between the main types of course. The main components of the Short Training Course syllabus, as laid down in the MSC Guidelines, were as follows: (i) Induction; (ii) Training in Work Skills; (iii) Job Seeking and Other Social and Life Skills; and (iv) Personal Advice and Support (Counselling).⁽⁷⁰⁾ The principal difference here as compared to work experience schemes was in element (ii) where 'Training in Work Skills' replaced 'Planned Work Experience'. The Work Introduction Course syllabus repeated the main components of the Short Training Course, but made certain additions and changes of emphasis. Alongside Induction at the beginning of the course, more emphasis was put on initial Assessment. 'Training in Work Skills' was re-worded as 'Training in Basic Work Skills', with the emphasis on training in simple skills covering a wide range of employment opportunities. Finally, instruction in Number and Communication was placed alongside training in Social and Life Skills as a requirement of content.⁽⁷¹⁾ The principal way in which the content of Work Skills Courses differed from that of Short Training Courses was that it included 'Planned Work Experience' at an external placement, as well as 'Training in Work Skills', the two elements being integrated into a complementary package.⁽⁷²⁾ In this respect, a Work Skills Course could be regarded as a combination of a six month WEEP and an extended Short Training Course. However, there were other differences which will be explained as they arise. Despite these complications, I intend to keep to four basic headings similar to those that I have used in the two work experience sectors.

* * * * *

3. Induction

This was to include the introduction of trainees to each other and the training establishment, and information about the purpose of the

scheme, the payment of allowances, safety at work, disciplinary arrangements, etc. In the case of Work Skills Courses and Work Introduction Courses, it was also emphasised that the young people should be assessed during the early stages of the course in order to determine their training needs. This assessment would then be used in the planning of their subsequent progress through the course. In the case of Short Training Courses, such an initial assessment was optional. As with recruitment and selection, Training Opportunities Advisers were directly involved in the induction process.

On the courses that I examined, in general, the induction procedures closely followed the MSC Guidelines. Thus, for example, the standard procedure at the Skillcentre included the three following elements.

- "1. A tour of the premises noting the location of toilets, emergency exits and first aid facilities.
2. The need for: safety at work, discipline, care when handling equipment, etc.; workshop and personal cleanliness.
3. Introduction to supervisors and potential colleagues and/or peers."

In addition all trainees had to take an arithmetic test to assess whether they needed any extra numeracy training in order to be able to complete their courses. Although these were not Work Introduction Courses, 90% needed some form of remedial help. Elsewhere procedures were similar. At industrial, as opposed to college-based, training establishments there was a tendency for more emphasis to be put on discipline, and rules and regulations. Thus, at the Apprentice Training Centre, each new trainee had to read and sign a copy of the rules, agreeing to abide by them and the accompanying disciplinary procedure. At colleges, the tendency was for more emphasis to be put on the establishment of social relationships. Thus, the Work Introduction Course at College 2 started off with a week's residential which was designed to help the trainees get to know each other and the staff.

4. Training in Work Skills and Planned Work Experience

The MSC Guidelines on the syllabus of a Short Training Course stated the following with regard to Training in Work Skills:

"Under supervision, trainees will be given instruction in a range of work skills which are required by local employers. A course in office skills, for example, would be widely based so that it might lead to employment as a typist, receptionist, clerk, telephonist or business machine operator. The time spent on each activity should be sufficient to allow young people to develop occupational skills and to make realistic assessments of their own interests and capabilities." (73)

In the case of work Introduction Courses, the emphasis was placed on a wider range of sampling:

"Courses should provide the young people with as many simple work skills as possible to prepare them for a wide range of employment opportunities." (74)

Once again it was stressed that the skills taught should be relevant to the trainees' local labour market. In addition, it was stated that:

"The needs of the young people may require the training to be provided in the form of structured work experience within the training establishment. Such work experience must be supervised by the course tutor." (75)

Finally, in the case of Work Skills Courses, formal occupational training of the kind specified in the Short Training Course syllabus was to be extended and integrated with planned work experience at an external placement. (76)

Some idea has already been given of the overall range of training courses available in the local area, and of the particular courses available at the training establishments that I visited. During my visits I was interested, firstly, to find out why particular training courses had been laid on by particular training establishments, and how these decisions had been related to the needs of the local labour market. Secondly, I sought to gain more information about the training content of these courses, and once again how this was related to the

local labour market. Finally, in the cases where the courses included planned work experience, I tried to establish how this had been organised and integrated with the training content.

The first point which must be noted is that, in this sector as the other two sectors, there was no systematic plan made by the MSC to ensure that training provision was directly related to the needs of the local labour market. Rather it was the case that the pattern of training course provision gradually evolved in response to several, often conflicting influences, one amongst which was the needs of the local labour market. Originally, both before and at the beginning of YOP, courses were simply laid on under what were considered to be 'obvious headings' such as Construction, Painting and Decorating, Engineering, Office Skills, etc. Such headings were 'obvious' because they related to traditional areas of industry, in which young people had expectations of finding employment and for which training facilities were most readily available. Courses continued to be offered under these same headings throughout the Programme, though, as will be seen, there were some efforts made to develop the content beneath these headings. At the same time, as the demand for places rose, there was a gradual addition of new courses, which in the final year was greatly accelerated by the introduction of Work Skills Courses. With the development of these newer courses, some attempt was made to take more systematic account of the local labour market. Analyses were carried out of the Careers Service vacancy statistics and the Industrial Training Boards were consulted for relevant information. However, it was never possible simply to plan the pattern of provision so that it systematically related to an analysis of the available information concerning the present and future needs of the local labour market. Two other factors, which have already been alluded to, always had to be taken account of and often ran counter to the influence of the needs of the local labour market. The first, and most important, of these was the availability of suitable training facilities. As will be seen below, it was often the case that high quality training facilities could be made available to the Programme

precisely because there was a lack of demand in the local labour market for the skills in which they were able to provide training. Under the pressure of limited time and money the MSC generally had to accept such facilities as it was offered. The second countervailing factor that had to be taken account of, at least in theory, was the personal preferences of the trainees. Often these preferences were directed towards trade areas in which there was a family tradition, and collectively this tended to produce a pattern of demand for training aimed at the traditional local labour market, rather than that of the foreseeable future. Thus, insofar as trainees' preferences were taken account of, their influence tended to reinforce the effects of the limited availability of training facilities, and to undermine further the relation between training course provision and the future needs of the local labour market. The way in which these various factors combined to determine the range and pattern of courses provided was exposed in more detail when I investigated how individual training establishments had come to provide the particular courses that they did.

At each of the colleges that I visited, YOP courses had to some extent made use of facilities which had previously been used for apprentice training. The exact extent varied from college to college, depending upon the vocational areas in which the particular college specialised. In general, it was the courses in traditional manual trades that were most likely to be using spare capacity made available to them by the decline of apprentice training. Thus, for example, at College 1 it was possible to provide the facilities for the Road Motor Vehicle Servicing Work Skills Course because of the decline in the number of apprentices and other privately sponsored trainees. At the same time, this was an area of training for which many YOP trainees had expressed a preference. Furthermore, for other courses, this college made use of accommodation and facilities at the Unicorn Training Centre, which had previously been the Apprentice Training Centre for the Dockyard. At College 2, the Engineering courses similarly made use of spare capacity created by the reduction of apprentice training. College 3, however, was different insofar as it had never been involved with

traditional apprentice training. Nevertheless, like College 1, it made use of accommodation at the Unicorn Training Centre for the provision of YOP courses.

However, it was only a minority of the training course provision in colleges that simply replaced previously existing apprentice training in this way. The rest was provided as an addition, which in some instances was made room for by the more efficient usage of existing staff and facilities, and in other instances involved the taking on of new staff and the provision of new facilities. In these cases there was probably more scope for the active consideration of the needs of the local labour market, but still much depended upon which departments were the most enthusiastic, and the most willing and able to adapt themselves to the requirements of YOP provision. Relevance to the local labour market, in some cases, seemed at best a fortunate coincidence, which was only introduced as an important consideration in order to provide a retrospective rationalisation for decisions taken on other grounds. The college courses, for which the most elaborate efforts had been made to establish the demand in the local labour market, were those run by College 3 on behalf of the private training organisation which had set itself up as a pilot managing agency. Available local labour market information had been analysed by the training organisation in order to identify areas of potential future growth for which training might be needed. At the same time a catalogue had been made of existing local training facilities and this then had been related to the training needs identified. The result of this process was the three Work Skills Courses in Front Office/Reception, Recreation/Leisure/Tourism, and Distribution/Warehousing. In support of the other Work Skills Course at this college, that in Craft, Design and Technology, the argument was made that the need for the repair and maintenance of a predominantly 19th Century city created a demand for the skills that it taught. Elsewhere, at College 1, the Repair and Maintenance of Hotel, Catering and Public Building Services Work Skills Course was regarded in a similar way as being responsive to a particular area of growing demand on the local labour

market. Finally, at College 2, the long-running Office Skills Short Training Course had from the beginning been seen as a response to the continuing local demand for junior typists and clerks with some basic training. Thus, at all three colleges, there were examples of local labour market needs being given serious consideration in the decision to mount a course.

However, it is necessary to be careful, since such serious consideration was not necessarily all that it seemed. At College 2, the publically presented rationale for establishing the Personal Services Courses was to provide girls with vocational training to help them find employment in the expanding services sector of the local economy. The real reasoning was different. The Careers Service had specifically requested the college to lay on a course for low ability young girls, many of whom, faced by the likelihood of unemployment, were seeking to gain status by getting pregnant or marrying young. Thus, the hidden objective of the course was to develop the domestic skills of the girls in order to help them to cope with what was considered realistically to be the likely circumstances of their future lives. The recent unpopularity of 'A' level Domestic Science at the college meant that, by 'happy coincidence', the staff and facilities were available to provide such courses.

Turning now to the non-college training establishments, at two out of three of these, YOP provision had simply replaced existing apprenticeships and training courses for which there was insufficient demand. It has already been mentioned how, at the Apprentice Training Centre, YOP courses were used to fill the spare capacity left by the rapid decline of apprenticeships in shipbuilding. Similarly, at the Skill-centre, there had been no overall increase of training capacity, but rather the in-filling of YOP trainees had been used to replace adult TOPs trainees. The number of TOPs trainees had been reduced because of the declining rate of job placements at the end of courses. In theory, the range of courses was supposed to be adapted to the changing needs of the local labour market. However, it was both expensive and time-consuming to keep introducing new courses in an

attempt to respond to such changes. The easier solution was to tighten up the entry requirements for TOPs courses, by putting more emphasis upon candidates being able to demonstrate that they would be able to get a job at the end of their course, and then to fill the spaces thus created with YOP trainees. Thus, at the Skillcentre, the situation was that YOP trainees were being in-filled onto courses which had reduced their intakes of adult trainees because of the difficulty being experienced in finding employment at the end of such courses.

At the Engineering Training Association, however, there was a different situation. Although the development of YOP courses had coincided with a decline in the number of apprenticeships being catered for by the association, there was apparently no direct connection between the two. The association did not use its own facilities to carry out the training of its members' apprentices, but those of the local colleges, in particular College 1. The association's own Training Centre, at which the YOP courses were provided, was used almost exclusively for the training of unemployed young people. As has already been mentioned, it had been set up six years previously for this specific purpose, in response to a request from the Engineering Industrial Training Board. Moreover, this request had been the outcome of a labour market survey which had revealed that young people were experiencing great difficulty in making a direct transition between school and employment as machine operators. Thus the Centre had been set up to meet this need for school leavers to be provided with some form of basic junior operator training. Likewise, when subsequently the association had introduced a second electronically based Short Training Course, this had been developed as a result of information obtained from the Careers Service, the MSC and the Engineering Industrial Training Board, which had persuaded them that there was growth in this area of the local labour market. As it happens, this information appears to have been misleading, since great difficulty was experienced in finding jobs for the trainees when they completed the course. This only goes to show that, even when serious consideration was taken of available labour market information, this information

could not necessarily be guaranteed to be sufficiently detailed or reliable to identify exactly where additional training provision was needed.

Looking back across the whole range of training courses available, both in colleges and in other training establishments, it can now be seen that many factors intervened to ensure that there was only a partial correspondence with the range of demand in the local labour market. Yet, even if a particular course corresponded to a general area of demand, this did not necessarily mean that it was relevant to that area of demand. Relevance depended also upon the content of the course, and whether it was kept up to date with developments in the corresponding area of demand. Consequently, I was interested to establish from what sources course curricula had originally been derived and how they had subsequently been developed and reorganised.

The curricula of both Short Training Courses and Work Skills Courses were normally based on pre-existing modules of training which were already being provided by the particular training institution. In the case of the colleges, these were generally taken from established further education courses, such as BEC and TEC, and City and Guilds. Elsewhere, at the Apprentice Training Centre the 1st year apprentice training course was the source, and at the Skillcentre it was the TOPs courses. The exception was the Engineering Training Association, where the operator course had been designed specifically on the basis of information gained from the Engineering ITB survey which had originally identified the need for such a course, combined with the association's own local knowledge of training needs.

Short Training Courses had often been run under the same heading year after year, sometimes from as far back as 1976. The content of many of these had originally been very narrow. The training modules on which they were based had been stripped of much of their theoretical 'classroom' content, and a few basic practical skills had been concentrated upon, which could be taught to comparatively low ability trainees over a period of 13 weeks. Over the years, the

MSC had encouraged various measures of quality improvement such as, more adaptation to the needs of the individual trainee, the inclusion of a work experience element, and in particular the widening of the vocational area covered by individual courses through an increased emphasis on the development of transferable skills. Furthermore, it was seen as important that they should keep up with technological developments taking place in outside industry. However, amongst the courses that I examined, there was considerable variation in the extent to which their content had been developed and improved over time.

For example, the Office Skills course at College 2, which had started as a 'Gateway' course in 1976, had altered little over the following six years. By concentrating on the basic skills required by junior office staff, such as typing, and working on the development of the trainees' general communication skills, the course had originally been able to achieve practically a 100% job placement rate. Although subsequently this rate dropped, the course was still regarded as sufficiently successful to carry on without substantial modification throughout the history of the Programme. In contrast, the Short Training Course in Construction at College 1, which dated back to September 1979, had undergone substantial modification during its subsequent history. Throughout, it had specialised in dealing with difficult, aggressive male trainees who had low educational attainments and/or a record of not wanting to work. Originally, the course had included no formal training content and had consisted of labouring projects which were little more than "digging holes in the ground and filling them in with concrete". The primary purpose was to achieve attitudinal changes. Otherwise it was just a way of keeping the lads occupied and off the dole. Nevertheless, at this stage, the course had been able to place up to 90% of its trainees in employment. Subsequently, as it became more difficult to maintain a high placement rate, more emphasis was placed on the development of the training content of the course. The project work was continued for two and a half days of each week, but the remaining two and a half days were devoted to formal 'off-the-job' training. Four half days of training were provided in each of the following construction skill areas - bricklaying, carpentry, plumbing,

and electricians. The remaining half day was spent on general education. Subsequently, in September 1981, an optional three month external work experience placement was added to the basic three month course. To be allowed to go on to such a placement, trainees had to prove during the course that they were capable of coping with the work involved. Throughout the development of the course, the department which ran it was able to monitor the local labour market through its contacts in the construction industry and its involvement with the running of courses for the Construction ITB. Despite a high rate of unemployment amongst construction workers in general, there was a certain level of continued demand for young people entering the industry.⁽⁷⁷⁾ However, over recent years, the pattern of this demand had changed. The demand from large firms working on large construction sites had declined, whereas there had been an increase in demand from small builders involved mostly in repair and maintenance work on private homes. This had been taken account of in the development of the content of the course. As well as requiring an emphasis on slightly different skills, private repair work made appearance and manners more important attributes in a potential employee than was the case with building site work.

Work Skills Courses, because they tended to select higher ability trainees and because they had twice the length of training content of Short Training Courses, were generally able to retain more of the theoretical content of the training modules from which their curricula were derived. Indeed, some of these courses were able to offer their trainees the opportunity to obtain further education qualifications or to undertake the same training as that normally given to first year apprentices. However, in certain instances, there was a tension between this reversion to conventional models of high quality training and the forms of quality improvement that the MSC was expecting from these new courses. The development of Short Training Courses had demonstrated the difficulties involved in identifying local labour market needs and matching course provision to them. As a result of this experience, as we have seen, gradually more emphasis was put upon training in transferable skills that could be

made more relevant to wider vocational areas. With the introduction of Work Skills Courses, the concept of skill transferability was extended and given more formal organisation in the new system of Occupational Training Families. However, the impact of this MSC initiative upon the individual courses that I examined was sporadic and inconsistent.

The Work Skills Course in Engineering Practical Skills at the Apprentice Training Centre provides an example of the way in which the MSC's concept of quality improvement based on the development of broad transferable skills came into conflict with a more conventional model of high quality training based on traditional craft skills. During the first six months of the course, before they went out on work experience placements, the YOP trainees went through exactly the same training programme as the first year apprentices did. The only differences between the two groups were that the apprentices had brown overalls, whereas the YOP trainees had blue overalls, and the apprentices were paid roughly double the YOP allowance - a cause of certain resentment. The training programme which both groups undertook was based on craft standards and had originally been designed in accordance with the recommendations of the Shipbuilding ITB. The first 10 weeks consisted of a common basic training, which included an introduction to each of the main skill areas covered at the training centre. Then the trainees were divided between two main streams, one specialising in metal work, the other in engineering and electronics, with a third, smaller subsidiary group in woodwork. Such specialisation went against the drift of MSC policy. Furthermore, it seemed that little consideration had been given to the particular needs of the YOP trainees or to the requirements of the local labour market outside the shipbuilding industry. Indeed, the attitude of the training centre management was that such considerations were not their responsibility. They provided what they believed was the highest quality training possible with the existing staff and facilities. If the MSC wanted something different they would either have to go elsewhere or provide the funding necessary to adapt the facilities and retrain the staff for what they wanted. As far as the concept of

skill transferability was concerned, this was used to support the status quo of specialist craft training based on the traditional model of apprenticeship. If skills could be transferred, it did not so much matter that the training was not as broad as it could have been. Without actually changing the curriculum, it could be hoped that the trainees would be able to adapt the basic manipulative skills that they had learnt to a variety of different jobs that might be available in the local labour market.

Another aspect of quality improvement that the MSC re-emphasised with the introduction of Work Skills Courses was the inclusion of various aspects of new technology, in particular micro-electronics. However, once again the influence of this policy was only occasionally evident in the courses that I examined. The Work Skills Course at the Apprentice Training Centre was in fact one of the courses that included some content concerned with computer awareness, as was the Engineering course at College 2. Interestingly, in both cases, these innovations were the initiatives of the course providers rather than having been directly encouraged by the local MSC. Elsewhere, I saw little evidence of such developments. In certain cases, training was being carried out on obsolete machinery and techniques were being taught that it was acknowledged were no longer used in local industry. One such example was the inclusion of instruction in filing techniques as part of the Mechanical Engineering course at the Skillcentre. The problem often was that the training establishments could not afford the new machinery which incorporated the technological advances.

Apart from having twice the length of training content of Short Training Courses, the principal way in which Work Skills Courses differed was that they included six months of related work experience. Although, as we have seen, some Short Training Courses included an element of work experience, it was never a statutory element constituting 50% of the course. The responsibility for arranging and monitoring of the work experience placements was that of the course providers. The effort involved in finding suitable placements varied from course to

course. The course providers with good contacts in relevant areas of local industry found it comparatively easy. For example, the Engineering Training Association was able to place almost all of the trainees on its course with member companies. In other cases, the Careers Service was able to provide lists of suitable placements, usually with firms that had previously acted as WEEP sponsors. However, for some courses, it was still very difficult to find all the places that they needed. The Work Skills Course at the Apprentice Training Centre, at the time of my visit, looked like finding only 60% of the places that it required. Thus, 40% of the trainees were going to have to stay on at the training centre doing projects with the apprentices. Furthermore, not all the places that had been found were relevant to the training that had been given. This was a cause for complaint amongst trainees on certain other courses as well. Nevertheless, the monitoring of placements by the course providers was generally far more frequent than that carried out by the MSC in the WEEP sector. They were still responsible for paying the trainees their allowances, and therefore visits were often made as frequently as once a week. Furthermore, some course tutors expressed the opinion that their monitoring visits were not only more frequent but more effective than the MSC's. This was because they had a more intimate knowledge of the particular local industry and could obtain better access to individual companies. Finally, it should be noted that the six months duration of these placements could be made up in various ways. In some cases, such as the course at the Apprentice Training Centre, the work experience came in a single six month block at the end of the formal training element. In other cases, shorter periods of work experience, generally of between one and two months in length, were alternated with periods of formal training of similar length. This would generally be arranged so that there would be two groups of trainees swapping with each other between the two elements. This made it possible for both the training establishments and the work experience placements to be filled to capacity all the year round.

Having described and compared the training and work experience content of Short Training Courses and Work Skills Courses, it should be noted

that almost unanimously amongst course providers the latter were regarded as the most successful format. Opinions on Short Training Courses varied: some regarded them as useful in their own right, others thought them a waste of time. In contrast, Work Skills Courses were generally highly regarded. The extra length of formal training content was often seen as making all the difference. It was not merely that the quantity of training was doubled, the extra time also made an essential qualitative difference. On the one hand, the trainees apparently regarded the longer courses far more seriously. On the other hand, the course providers felt that they had time to organise what they regarded as high quality training. The integrated work experience placement was also seen as giving the Work Skills Courses a great advantage. It gave an added element of realism to the course as a whole, particularly when it was organised on the basis of alternation with the formal training content. Furthermore, it gave trainees a useful contact with employers which greatly enhanced their chances of finding a permanent job at the end. However, the very success of Work Skills Courses was a cause of grievance amongst their providers, particularly at the colleges. It had originally been understood, when the MSC had asked for these 12 month courses to be developed, that they were to be pilots for the Youth Training Scheme which was to be introduced in the following year. Hence they were commonly referred to as 'NTI pilots'. On this understanding, it was claimed, a lot of work had been put into developing and ensuring the success of these courses. However, by the time that I was making my visits, it was becoming increasingly clear that this format of training course was not going to be continued under the Youth Training Scheme. The vast majority of places were going to be provided by the employer-based 'Mode A' sector, and the main role of colleges and other training establishments was going to be the provision of the 3 months off-the-job training for these programmes. Thus, the development work that had been carried out on the basis of the so-called 'NTI pilot' format had largely been a waste of time. This was a cause of widespread resentment, particularly amongst college staff. The feeling was that they had been misled and let down by the MSC. Furthermore, the reduction of the formal training content from 26 to 13 weeks was generally

regarded as a regressive step that would reverse much of the quality improvement that the extra time available to Work Skills Courses had allowed.

Work Introduction Courses were different from Short Training Courses and Work Skills Courses insofar as they were job sampling courses rather than being directed towards specific vocational areas. As such, they could not so easily be derived from pre-existing training modules. Consequently, their design and development tended to involve a greater degree of innovation. At College 2, however, the staff were able to make use of the previous experience which they had gained from the development of the Unified Vocational Preparation Course. An inter-departmental team was already established which had experience of working together on the development and organisation of individual courses. This provided the foundation of a cross-college approach to course provision which helped greatly with the development of the diverse job sampling content of the Work Introduction Course. Besides job sampling, the main elements of training content in a Work Introduction Course were social and life skills, and various forms of remedial education. These are considered separately in the next section. As far as the work experience content was concerned, this was in general flexibly organised to meet the needs of individual trainees. At College 2, after the residential induction week at the beginning of the course, trainees were gradually moved towards undertaking two days a week of work experience in sheltered placements. Often these were located within the college, in the stores for example, so that the trainees were never far away from support if they needed it. Otherwise, the course had developed a register of 20 or 30 suitable placements, where there were sympathetic employers who were prepared to make some allowance for the special needs of these particular youngsters. The total amount of work experience undertaken by a trainee whilst on the course depended upon the needs of the individual. If it was thought to be beneficial, the time spent at a placement could be expanded to as much as four days a week. However, when the extended Work Introduction Course was introduced in the final year, some of this flexibility was lost. The 13 week course was run

as usual, but then the trainees were sent out on 26 week work experience placements. During these placements, they returned to the college on day release once a week.

5. 'Off-the-Job Training' (Social and Life Skills, Remedial and Further Education)

Inverted commas are necessary here since the whole content of training courses in this sector, except for the work experience placements, could be described as off-the-job training. However, what is being referred to is only those elements which were the equivalent of the off-the-job training that was associated with work experience schemes. This means, primarily, social and life skills, and remedial numeracy and literacy. However, in the case of some Work Skills Courses, it also refers to separate vocationally based further education courses which trainees undertook whilst on day release from the establishments at which they were accommodated during the rest of the week. As with the analysis of off-the-job training in the two work experience sectors, this analysis is based on information obtained from the questioning of those with overall responsibility for these courses. An analysis from the angle of those specifically responsible for the provision of the off-the-job training content will, as has already been explained, be provided separately.

In the case of the training courses based at colleges, their social and life skills and remedial education content was generally provided by the Liberal or General Studies Department within the particular college. Although both part of the same formal institution, there was not always close liaison between these departments and those with the overall responsibility for the provision of the courses. Thus the problem, which has already been identified in the two work experience sectors, of off-the-job training being inadequately related to the main content of the scheme/course, was sometimes reproduced in this sector, even when the two elements of the course were accommodated within the same institution.

Only one of the three non-college training establishments used local college provision of social and life skills training as the 'off-the-

job' element for some of its courses. This was the Engineering Training Association which made weekly day release for social and life skills training at the local college a compulsory element of its Short Training Courses. Once again, in this case, coordination appears to have been poor. Furthermore, the course organiser shared the low opinion of college-base social and life skills training that was previously expressed by work experience sponsors and managers. Specifically, he complained that the college tutors were not committed to what they were doing and were merely delivering a pre-packaged syllabus. This, he observed, was reflected in the negative attitudes of the trainees. It was like going back to school, and that was the last thing that they wanted. At the Apprentice Training Centre, there does not appear to have been any formal 'off-the-job' social and life skills content included as part of the Short Training Courses. However, the training instructors were expected to include a certain amount of information about job applications, bank loans and similar matters, alongside the main vocational content of the course. Finally, at the Skillcentre, there was an education instructor who was responsible for providing both social and life skills training and remedial numeracy to the YOP trainees whilst they were on courses at the centre.

In practice, the 'off-the-job' content of Work Skills Courses was often the same as that of Short Training Courses. In the cases where it was different, the difference lay in a move away from social and life skills training towards courses with a greater vocational content which led to formal qualifications. Thus, for example, both the Engineering Training Association and the Apprentice Training Centre sent their work Skills Course trainees on day release to local colleges to undertake City and Guilds 200 Basic Craft Studies courses. These courses included an element of social studies as well as their vocational content, but generally they were regarded as much more satisfactory than the social and life skills provision.

Finally, the case of Work Introduction Courses is slightly different insofar as it is more difficult to identify a separate element of

content that can be labelled 'off-the-job training'. On these courses, the social and life skills and remedial education were not peripheral, but were a core element of course content. Thus, at both the colleges that ran Work Introduction Courses, the provision was located in the Liberal/General Studies Department, and it was developed in parallel with the 'off-the-job' training being provided for other schemes and courses. At College 2, the Work Introduction Course was regarded as a social and life skills course per se. The sampling of a range of specific vocational skills was thus principally a vehicle for the development of these more general skills.

6. Counselling and Trainee Centred Reviewing

For each of the three different types of course, it was a requirement that there should be available to the trainees personal advice and support provided by a responsible adult. Other agencies, such as the Careers Service, were to liaise and help as necessary. Additionally, in the case of Work Skills Courses, the need was stipulated for a continuous review of progress to be made, culminating in the production of a profile showing the trainee's attainments and general development. Furthermore, it was emphasised that the trainees themselves should take an active part in this process, logging their own progress and discussing it with their tutor.

As has been mentioned before, it is difficult to isolate and analyse the counselling content of a scheme or course. As one course co-ordinator put it to me, "Counselling - that's 100 per cent of the job." Usually, the prime responsibility for counselling lay with the tutors and instructors who worked with the trainees on a day-to-day basis. They generally regarded this counselling role as a natural extension of their working relationship with the trainees. As such, it was something that was learnt through experience rather than any specific training. The attitude of those in managerial positions was often expressed by the phrase "my door is always open". However, they did not expect to be bothered with minor everyday problems, and it was usually only with serious disciplinary matters that they would become directly involved. In such cases, the Careers Service and the

trainee's parents might also be brought in. At the Skillcentre, the education officer who provided the social and life skills, was also the person primarily responsible for counselling. He regarded the two roles as being closely related and the discussion groups which he ran were intended to cover both areas, though trainees of course could also speak to him individually if necessary. Similarly, at College 1, the tutors at the Liberal Studies Department, who were responsible for providing social and life skills training, regarded counselling as an important aspect of their role. They described themselves as providing a safety valve, through which trainees could let off steam about other areas of the course provision.

The reviewing of trainees' progress on Work Skills Courses usually took the form of weekly reports filled out by instructors. From these, an overall profile of trainee achievements could be built up. Often these reports and profiles were modelled on those used for apprentices. Sometimes they had already been adopted for Short Training Courses as well. Trainee involvement usually took the form of their writing up some kind of log book. However, this process often appeared to be kept completely separate from the reports being made by the instructors, so in fact there were two parallel processes of review rather than a single collective process centred on the trainee. Only at one course did I see trainees given the opportunity to negotiate and to participate actively in the assessments that were made of their progress. In some cases they did not even see these assessments.

7. Monitoring

Once again, this was the responsibility of the Training Services Division rather than the Special Programmes Division. Training Opportunities Advisers, who were also responsible for monitoring adult training courses, undertook the equivalent role of Special Programmes Division Area Link Officers. Under these arrangements, this sector of YOP was in general more tightly administered and closely monitored than the two work experience sectors.

At all but one of the training establishments that I visited, the Training Opportunities Advisers had maintained regular and close contact with the course providers. The exception was the Skillcentre which, as an internal element of the MSC training network, had not been thought to require separate monitoring of its YOP provision. However, at the time of my visit, this situation was in fact changing in response to the increasing independence of Skillcentre operations from direct MSC control. Elsewhere, in addition to being closely involved with both the recruitment and induction processes, the Training Opportunities Advisers usually made visits at least once a month during which they would speak to the trainees individually. In some cases, particularly where the training establishment was also involved in TOPs provision, contact was far more frequent than this. As well as checking on the progress made by individual trainees, it was ensured that health and safety standards were being upheld and that the agreed training programme was being followed. Financial monitoring seems to have been less of a priority than in the work experience sectors, probably because the Training Services Division retained direct control over the payment of trainees' allowances and thus there was less delegation of financial responsibility to the course providers. Finally, because of the close contact maintained by the Training Services Division with courses in this sector, the role of the Careers Service as a secondary monitoring agency was less important than it was in the two work experience sectors.

8. End of Scheme

Under this heading, I was concerned to find out what happened to the trainees at the end of the various different kinds of courses. Being the first year of the 12 month Work Skills Courses, there were not yet available any figures for the placement rates of trainees leaving these courses. Thus, the account that follows is based only on the figures from the Short Training Courses and the 13 week Work Introduction Courses.

In general, the work preparation side of YOP was considerably less successful at placing trainees in employment than the work experience

side. Originally, in the pre and early YOP era, many courses had achieved placement rates as high as 90%. It seemed then that, almost regardless of the content or quality of the actual training, the status of having attended a college or training establishment course was sufficient to give the young people the lift that they needed to get them into a job. However, as the general situation of the labour market had deteriorated, the placement rate of the short courses had dropped sharply, particularly in the case of those providing training in traditional skill areas such as engineering. By 1982, only 15% of those completing Short Training Courses and Work Introduction Courses were finding permanent employment, compared with just over 40% from the various work experience schemes. Between a third and a half of those unable to find permanent employment would go onto another YOP placement, most usually a WEEP scheme. Most of the rest would go back on the unemployment register. Of all those leaving YOP training courses in South East Hampshire between April and June 1982, 41% went straight into unemployment. There was usually no follow-up provided by the course providers. At best these young people took away with them a few basic skills and a certain amount of work discipline that might help them to use their 'leisure' more creatively. At worst they had had their hopes raised and then dashed by a course which had trained them in the basic skills of jobs that no longer existed.

9. Production for Sale

The providers of the various training courses were not encouraged in the same way as Community Projects and Training Workshops to contribute to their running costs by producing goods for sale. Nevertheless, some of the non-college training establishments included production work as an element of their course content.

Thus, the Training Centre at which the Engineering Training Association provided its courses for YOP trainees was production based, carrying out various kinds of sub-contract work. Similarly, the

Skillcentre made standard charges for jobs such as car repairs and resprays which were undertaken by the trainees. These activities of course raise the same questions about unfair competition and job displacement that were considered under this heading with reference to the second of the two work experience sectors. However, there is another side to this argument which needs to be illustrated. At the Apprentice Training Centre the trainees carried out exercises in carpentry and metalwork, the end products of which would often be destroyed and used as scrap. Ironically, the level of craftsmanship deployed in these exercises was often a great deal higher than that in the goods produced for sale by the work experience schemes. The course could not be accused of endangering other people's livelihoods, but it could be accused of being wasteful. At the same time, this example illustrates the vast gulf that existed between the worlds in which different local YOP schemes were operating. While the materials bank and craft unit of Community Project 1 scrounged scraps of hardboard which could be tacked together, painted and sold as rough and ready toys, the Apprentice Training Centre had trainees carrying out highly skilled work in wood and metal which, once completed, would only be taken apart again or destroyed.

10. Staff

The MSC Guidelines had little to say about the staffing of courses in this sector. It was merely indicated that a course proposal should specify the person with overall responsibility for the course and the number of other course staff available. (78)

Unlike in the non-WEEP work experience sector, staff were not usually recruited and trained specifically for YOP training courses. Most of the staff who were responsible for the running of these courses had previously been employed by the various training establishments in some other capacity, either dealing with apprentices, further education students or TOPs trainees. The exception to this rule was provided by the Engineering Training Association. Because its Training Centre

had from the beginning been established in order to cater for unemployed school leavers, the staff had been recruited and trained specifically for this purpose. Elsewhere, staff who were used to dealing with well-motivated apprentices and students had experienced certain difficulties with the new influx of YOP trainees. This was particularly so in the case of the colleges, which for their Short Training Course had tended to be less selective than the other training establishments. Not only did the tutors have to adapt to a new client group, they also had to construct a new kind of course. Initially, little help appears to have been available from the MSC in terms of training and support, so not surprisingly the process of adaptation had in some cases been fairly traumatic. One college course co-ordinator recalled that the initial reaction of his staff had been one of revolt. Considerable support and discussion had been necessary before eventually they had come to terms with the new situation. Of course, in certain vocational areas where the YOP courses represented a net increase of provision rather than a means of filling spare capacity, some new staff had been taken on. However, the main area in which colleges had recruited new staff specifically for YOP was that of Social and Life Skills training. This is dealt with separately, below, in the sub-section under the heading of 'Off-the-Job Training'.

As the scale of YOP provision in colleges was expanded, and attention was turned towards the development of pilot courses in preparation for YTS, the MSC nationally had come to recognise the need for additional development and training support to help further education staff cope with the new demands that were being placed upon them. Consequently, it had made available to LEAs for this purpose a discretionary supplement for the three year period, 1981-84. The supplement, popularly known as the 'Robinson shilling', was calculated on the basis of 5p per student hour for each YOP trainee being catered for. This represented the amount necessary to provide 25 days' staff and curriculum development for tutors working full-time on YOP, and proportionally less for those with less involvement.

Hampshire, in common with many other LEAs, proposed its own programme for YOP staff development and submitted an application for the MSC

supplement. The main feature of this programme was to be the establishment of local curriculum groups which would meet at weekly workshops/seminars. Attendance was to be obligatory, with time being allowed on tutors' teaching timetables for this purpose. At the sessions, it was intended that curriculum development and staff development should be brought together, and discussed in close relation to the localised reality of the on-the-job situation. This was an approach that had already been piloted in relation to UVP and YOP work in Hampshire, and which owed much to the influence of ideas put forward in the literature of the FEU. In addition, it was proposed that special pre-course induction sessions should be arranged to introduce all new staff to the key issues of Vocational Preparation. Finally, it was proposed that a series of optional conferences and courses should be organised at a county level with the objective of encouraging the exchange of new ideas and successful practice.

The emphasis placed by the Hampshire programme on local curriculum groups rather than formal courses was considered to be a unique feature. Nevertheless, this general approach had been enthusiastically endorsed by the MSC and the original proposal had been accepted with only minor alterations. However, it was not until January 1983 that the programme started to be implemented with the setting-up of the local curriculum groups. At the same time, a regular succession of one day courses had been arranged mainly concerned with the introduction of YTS. But even as the new arrangements were coming into operation, doubts were arising about their future, and in particular, about how they would fit in the MSC's plans to set up 'accredited centres' for YTS staff development and training. It was hoped that, if the local curriculum groups could be made a regular fixture by September 1983, they would survive.

11. Trainee Representation

My concern was to find out what arrangements had been made for trainees to represent themselves or to be represented by trade unions in the management of these courses.

In the non-college training establishments the style of management was generally autocratic. Individual grievances could usually be taken up through standard industrial procedures, but there was little scope for the trainees to have a collective say in the way in which the courses were run. Apart from at the Skillcentre, where the number of YOP trainees that could be infilled per section was regulated by a union agreement, the trade unions appeared to have had little or no impact upon the courses. Some Transport and General Workers Union leaflets had been handed out at the Apprentice Training Centre, but they had not succeeded in attracting the trainees. The attitude of the management was hostile to any union interference in the running of the Centre, and the trainees were regarded as being too young to be involved in such activities. As for the trainees themselves, whilst not overjoyed with their £25 a week, they were prepared to accept it if they were getting some proper training, and they were not prepared to lose any of it in union dues, even if these were only nominal.

At the colleges, the style of management was less overtly autocratic, but still the trainees had no organised collective input. Likewise, trade union influence was again negligible. An alternative source of trainee organisation was theoretically available in the Students Union, which the trainees were eligible to join as part-time members. However, the Union naturally tended to be dominated by the full-time further education students, and in most cases there seems to have been little contact between them and the YOP trainees. The Students Union representative whom I spoke to at College 1 did not know whether any YOP trainees had joined the Union. No special efforts had been made to recruit them, and no particular issues had been taken up on their behalf. Apparently, there was a certain feeling of resentment amongst the full-time students about the YOP trainees receiving a £25 allowance, when many of them had no financial support at all.

General Impressions

For a number of reasons, this was the most formalised and the most tightly regulated of the three sectors of provision. First, by their

very nature, training courses tend to be more formal and therefore more easy to regulate than work experience. Secondly, these particular courses were located in established institutions whose specific function was that of training. Thirdly, there was the fact that this sector was administered and monitored by the Training Services Division of the MSC, rather than directly by the Special Programmes Division. The TSD, through its responsibility for TOPs courses, already had close contacts with most of the institutions at which YOP courses were located. Moreover, its administrative control of TOPs provision was in general far tighter than the SPD's was of YOP provision. Thus, when it came to the administration and monitoring of this sector of YOP on behalf of the SPD, the TSD was able to extend a tighter form of control to the courses concerned.

The fact that provision in this sector was more formalised and more closely regulated meant that in certain respects there was less scope for variety than in the other two sectors. The different institutional locations, and in particular the contrast between industrial and educational environments, had a certain effect upon the character of the courses. However, the main lines of distinction in this sector were drawn by the formal definitions of the three main different kinds of courses - Short Training Courses, Work Skills Courses and Work Introduction Courses. The distinctions were made both in terms of selection and content. With the introduction of Work Skills Courses in September 1982, what might be described as a 'tripartite' system of selection was instituted in this sector. Thus, while the Work Skills Courses creamed off the more able trainees, the Work Introduction Courses selected out the most disadvantaged, leaving the Short Training Courses to take those who fell in-between. This pattern was not without exceptions: there were extended Work Introduction Courses that were accorded Work Skills Course status and there was, for example, the Personal Services Work Skills Course at College 2 which catered specifically for low ability girls. However, given such exceptions, the distinction between the three main types of course formed the basis of what in the final year had developed into a clearly defined system of selection. As far as content was concerned, it will be remembered that the main differences lay in the fact that Work Introduction Courses were not directed towards any

particular vocational area, whereas both Short Training Courses and Work Skills Courses were vocationally specific, with the former providing 13 weeks of formal training and the latter double this length of training combined with six months of work experience.

The fact that both Short Training Courses and Work Skills Courses were directed towards particular vocational areas gave rise to the question of their relevance to the needs of the local labour market. As we have seen, there was no systematic plan to relate the vocational distribution of the courses to an analysis of local labour market prospects. Rather courses were set up under the 'obvious' headings, which depended as much upon the availability of staff and facilities as upon what might be described as a 'commonsense' knowledge of local needs. As was the case with the availability of staff in the non-WEEP work experience sector, the availability of staff and facilities in this sector tended to be positively related to a lack of demand in the local labour market. Thus, some courses in this sector were put on as a direct result of a fall in demand for apprentices in declining local industries. Yet, even when the courses were genuinely new provision, and efforts had been made to direct them towards areas of growing demand, the information available was not necessarily sufficiently detailed or reliable to ensure that these courses would be able to place a high proportion of their trainees in permanent employment.

The placement record of this sector was, in general, poor when compared with that of the two work experience sectors taken together. However, the figures available were for the Short Training Courses and Work Introduction Courses that had been run before the final year of the Programme. These had the disadvantage of catering mainly for the lower ability trainees who had been rejected by WEEP sponsors. Also, although they offered well-regulated training, they could not for the most part provide the realism of work experience. Indeed, it could be argued that the fact that they were well-regulated and 'went by the book' contributed to their artificiality, particularly in the educational environment of the colleges. The Work Skills Courses largely avoided these handicaps. Most selected trainees above a

certain minimum level of ability, and, through the six month placement, they were able to offer trainees both realistic work experience and the opportunity to prove themselves to a potential employer. Unfortunately, because they were 12 month courses and had only been introduced in September 1982, at the time that this case study was being carried out no figures were yet available for the placement rates achieved by trainees at their completion.

Generally, the course providers considered the format of Work Skills Courses to be more satisfactory than that of Short Training Courses. Not only did the trainees gain the additional benefits of work experience, but also they received twice the quantity of training and this was widely regarded as making an important qualitative difference. Indeed, the best Work Skills Courses were able to provide an integrated programme of formal training and work experience that was qualitatively on a par with that offered by the ITEC. However, there were problems. Unlike in the case of the ITEC, not all the high quality courses in this sector were directed towards identifiable areas of growth in the local labour market. As we have seen, some were merely filling in for apprentices that were no longer in demand. Furthermore, the understanding of quality training of the course providers was not always fully in agreement with that of the MSC. Thus, there was sometimes a tendency to use the extra time available on these courses for further trade specialisation on the model of the apprenticeships that were being replaced, rather than broadening the range of skills available as the MSC would have liked. But probably the most serious problem was that of expense. Training courses were expensive compared with work experience, and doubling the period of training doubled their cost. Of course the ITEC was expensive also, but it was only a token showpiece for 30 trainees. Work Skills Courses, by contrast, were catering for 450 trainees, which represented two-thirds of the total of this sector of provision.

By the time that I was carrying out this case study, it was already clear that Work Skills Courses had little future under YTS. Although three months off-the-job training was specified as the minimum for a YTS training programme, it was generally understood that in most cases this would be the maximum. At the same time, the size of the

training establishment-based sector of provision (Mode B2) was being reduced in the MSC's plans, particularly in the South where it was expected to be easier to find the necessary employer-based provision (Mode A). Thus, it was becoming increasingly evident that the shape of provision in the final year of YOP, when the training course sector represented over a quarter of the total and consisted in the majority of one year courses including six months of formal training was a one-off situation and not the shape of things to come under YTS.

This fact was a source of some bitterness amongst course providers in this sector. The feeling was most strong in the colleges. They had put considerable effort into the development of the new Work Skills Courses on the understanding that they were to be pilots for the Youth Training Scheme. Now it was being revealed that YTS was no longer going to include such courses, and that the scope of provision under the control of the colleges was to be reduced to little more than a few extended Work Introduction Courses for trainees whom the employers could not cater for. Otherwise they were to be left to compete with private training organisations for the 13 weeks off-the-job training associated with the schemes run by employers' managing agencies.

The demise of Work Skills Courses illustrates the underlying limitations of provision in this sector. It will be remembered that the problems of the two work experience sectors were analysed in terms of either substitution or addition. Leaving aside for the moment their work experience content, the courses in this sector were essentially additional provision like that in the non-WEPP work experience sector. As such, they were subject to the same fundamental limitations of expense and artificiality. However, there was also a certain element of substitution present. The courses were provided by established institutions, for the most part using existing staff and facilities. The availability of these staff and facilities made it possible, in the final year of YOP, to bring about a large expansion of genuinely high quality training provision in this sector through the introduction of Work Skills Courses. However, in many cases the staff and facilities were available for these new YOP courses because

they were no longer required for other training courses which had existed previously. This is not to imply that there was a parallel form of substitution to that taking place in the WEEP sector, in the sense of the MSC funding training which otherwise would have continued to be funded from elsewhere. Rather, the problem was that this training would not have otherwise continued, thus implying that there was no longer a demand for the kind of skills that it produced on the local labour market. Moreover, such provision tended to adhere to the same ideals of quality as that which it had replaced, rather than adopting those espoused by the MSC. However, if the MSC had wanted to reproduce a comparable level of quality in accordance with its own ideals, and to have related the provision more systematically to the needs of the local labour market, it would have had to produce far more funding for the development of new courses. Thus it comes back to the fundamental underlying problem of additional provision, that of expense. To this can be added that of artificiality, as reflected in the poor placement record of this sector. Yet, if the realism of these courses was enhanced through the introduction of a work experience placement with an employer or production for sale, the same problems of substitution would arise as in the other two sectors. Thus, this sector also was trapped between the problems of additionality and substitution.

D Off-the-Job Training

The contribution of off-the-job training has been examined separately in each of the three sectors of provision that have been described above. At times the accounts given have been highly critical. However, it should be remembered that these accounts have been derived principally from the opinions expressed by those responsible for providing the main body of the work experience schemes and training courses. Not being directly responsible for the off-the-job training, it might be expected that they would tend to be more openly critical of this element of the provision. Thus, in order to provide balance, I sought also to obtain the opinions of the staff who were directly responsible for the off-the-job training throughout Hampshire as a whole.

In October 1980, Hampshire was one of 12 local education authorities nominated by the MSC to act as an 'Exemplary Project' for the provision of off-the-job training to work experience trainees. The Exemplary Projects initiative was one element of the wider quality improvement campaign that has already been described from the national perspective in Chapter 5. As we have seen, the proportion of work experience trainees receiving their entitlement to off-the-job training was regarded as an important gauge of quality. However, during the first year of the programme, only 17% of them had received this entitlement; and although the figure had risen to 35% in the second year, this was still not considered to be satisfactory. The objective of the Exemplary Projects initiative was to examine ways of increasing this proportion by replacing the ad hoc responses of individual colleges with co-ordinated authority wide plans. Each authority taking part received a £10,000 grant to fund the development work that was involved. The initiative as a whole was co-ordinated and monitored on behalf of the MSC by the Further Education Staff College at Combe Lodge. (79)

Before its designation as an Exemplary Project, Hampshire already had a County Working Group covering all aspects of YOP. This formed the basis of the County Exemplary Project Group which was subsequently established, and which included senior level representatives of the MSC and the Careers Service, along with College Principals and Officers of the Education Department. The task which this Project Group set itself was to analyse the existing state of off-the-job provision in the county, and to formulate a plan for its expansion and development. At the start of the Exemplary Project, the county's level of provision was well below the national average. Only 10% of all the trainees on work experience schemes, and only 5% of those on WEEP schemes, were receiving planned further education through the LEA. This for the most part consisted of social and life skills courses which were available at three of the ten colleges in the county. Otherwise, a small amount of infilling of trainees took place on existing vocational courses. This LEA provision was supplemented by a small number of three day social and life skills courses run by the private training organisation, JMB development training.

The plan formulated by the Project Group included a substantial expansion of existing social and life skills provision, involving not only the colleges, but also the youth and community services as providers. Also, three experimental vocational/social and life skills courses were to be piloted, one in each of the county's three Travel-to-Work Areas. Each course was to cover a different vocational grouping, selected on the basis of an analysis of the vocational distribution of WEEP scheme placements within each respective Travel-to-Work Area. As well as being concerned with the expansion of provision, the Project Group spent a considerable time discussing curriculum development and produced a common outline for social and life skills courses in the county. Half of the development grant provided by the MSC was spent on the servicing and expenses of the Project Group. The other half contributed towards the salary of a curriculum development officer who was given responsibility for liaising between the Project Group and the individual providers, and monitoring the implementation of the plan.

During the period of the Exemplary Project, the overall level of LEA off-the-job provision available to work experience trainees more than doubled. Thus, in the year to December 1981, there were 1470 places available compared with 550 in the previous year (some of these new places being provided in association with the Youth and Community Services and the Adult Basic Education Service rather than directly by the colleges). However, with the local youth unemployment situation deteriorating rapidly over this period, the number of trainees entering work experience schemes had increased almost as quickly as the level of off-the-job provision. As a result, the proportion of all work experience trainees that could be provided with planned further education by the LEA rose only marginally from 10% to 12%, and still remained well below the national average.

In certain other respects also, the achievement of the Exemplary Project was disappointing, particularly with regard to the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area. The vocational grouping chosen for the pilot course in this area was the construction industry, and it was intended that

the new provision should be located at College 1. However, the relevant department was reluctant to participate, and expressed the opinion that worthwhile vocational training could not be provided within the day release format, unless the trainees had already been on a Construction Short Training Course. After a series of abortive negotiations, the proposed pilot course was abandoned and instead the department ran a 12 month Vocational Preparation Scheme designed by the Construction ITB. It was next suggested that College 2 should run a day release course in Community Care for WEEP trainees in that vocational grouping. This time the college was more enthusiastic, and eventually the course was launched. However, when I enquired about it during my visit, I was told that the course had only been run once. Apparently, when the college had tried to repeat it, the Careers Service had informed them that there were not enough suitable WEEP trainees to make it worthwhile. Thus, in the Portsmouth Travel-to-Work Area at least, it would seem that this aspect of the Exemplary Project made very little impact.

I enquired more generally about the impact of the Exemplary Project at each of the three colleges that I visited. In each case it did not appear to have been great. Where development and innovation had taken place, in most cases it was thought that this would have happened anyway without the encouragement of the Project. Conversely, where there had been a lack of enthusiasm for this kind of provision, the Project did not appear to have been able to bring about a change of attitude. In hindsight, perhaps the most useful function served by the Exemplary Project was to provide a context for regular meetings of executive level representatives of the main organisations responsible for co-ordinating the local delivery of the programme. However, the Project Group did not continue to meet once the Project was over. Indeed, it was noticeable at both college and county levels that rather than being incorporated into the process of development towards YTS, the Exemplary Project seemed to have been something that had been dropped and forgotten about in the rush to prepare for the new programme. As seemed likely to be the case also with the staff development programme, just when a local response to a national initiative had had time to establish itself, a new initiative was overtaking it and rendering it obsolete.

Preliminary details of the off-the-job training provision at each of the three colleges that I visited in the Portsmouth TWA have already been given in the background accounts of these institutions at the beginning of this section. It will be remembered that College 1's involvement was for the most part restricted to the servicing of its own courses. As we have seen, it had not been prepared to accommodate the Exemplary Project's pilot vocational day release course. Ironically, however, at the time of my visit the Construction Department was organising on its own initiative a half-day release course in bricklaying for 15 trainees in the local building industry. College 2, in addition to servicing its own training courses, had since 1979 regularly provided day release off-the-job training in social and life skills for 24 work experience trainees per term. Attempts to expand provision beyond this level, as in the case of the Exemplary Project Community Care course, had been hampered by the difficulty experienced in maintaining a regular supply of suitable work experience trainees. Indeed, during 1982, the standard number being catered for had been reduced to 12 per term. College 3 was by far the largest local provider of off-the-job training. It had been involved in this provision since the beginning of YOP, and by 1982-83 its capacity had risen to a potential annual throughput of 5-600 trainees. However, it, like College 2, had recently been experiencing difficulty in recruiting sufficient work experience trainees to fill the available capacity.

The form taken by the off-the-job training for work experience trainees differed between the local colleges that were responsible for its provision, and at both the main locations had been subject to development and innovation. At College 2, the standard format was a 12 day course made up of weekly day release over a 12 week period. However, on a number of occasions, an alternative format had been used which included a three day residential in addition to 10 days of day release. Apparently, this innovation had not originally been supported by the MSC. Nevertheless, it had proved very successful, helping to make the course a more intensive experience of the trainees. It had not been continued because a shortage of college funding had made it impossible

to release the necessary staff. College 3 had originally provided a 12 week, one day a week, day release course similar to the standard format used at College 2. This had not been successful and there had been a high drop-out rate. The situation was analysed and the conclusion was reached that the main problem was the day release format. One day a week did not allow the trainees long enough consecutive spans of time to establish social relationships with the staff or with each other, or to get involved with the content of the course. Often they would forget what they had done the week before. Thus, in an attempt to ensure a greater continuity, a new format was introduced which consisted of four blocks, each three days long. Following this reform, the drop-out rate fell, and generally the new system was regarded as more satisfactory. Consequently, it was adopted on a permanent basis. It would seem that this block release format played the same role as the residential did when it was in operation at College 2. It helped to create a sense of group identity and to intensify the trainees' experience of the course.

Another dilemma faced by those organising provision was that of how best to cater for the wide range of abilities amongst the trainees. Originally, most of the trainees had been drawn from the lower ranges of academic ability. However, as the youth unemployment situation had deteriorated, increasing numbers of better qualified young people had come into the programme. Responses varied once again between the different colleges. At College 1, the social and life skills and remedial training provided for those undertaking YOP courses at the college was divided into three streams based on different levels of ability. In contrast, at College 3, no selection took place. A wide mix of abilities within a group was regarded as something positive which could contribute to the experience of all the trainees involved.

At all three of the colleges that I visited the main component of off-the-job training was social and life skills, alongside or including education in numeracy and literacy. At each of these locations much time and effort had been put into the development of the social and life skills curriculum. It will be remembered that one of the products of the Exemplary Project was the drafting of a common outline curri-

culum for the whole of the county. The intention of this was not to impose a rigid framework upon the individual colleges. Rather it was to be an open-ended set of aims and objectives, and as such, it was not so much a blue-print as a post facto summary drawn from the development work that had already been taking place for a number of years in the individual colleges.

The starting points for the development of Social and Life Skills curricula had been various. There was of course the MSC's own Instructional Guide.⁽⁸⁰⁾ However, tutors also drew upon existing General Studies material, which they tried to adapt to the particular needs of YOP trainees. Originally, heavy emphasis was placed on the development of job finding skills, such as the writing of applications and interview techniques. But, as the employment prospects deteriorated, the staff became aware that for a considerable proportion of the trainees the most likely future prospect was that of prolonged periods of unemployment. Thus the need was seen to include in the curriculum, in addition to job search skills, survival skills that would help the trainees to cope with life without a job, should their job search prove unsuccessful. Furthermore, it was increasingly realised that the skills being taught had to be transferable, so that they could be used in a number of different situations in the context of a rapidly changing and unpredictable society. These ideas were reflected in the two principal aims of the county's outline curriculum:

- " (1) To enable young people to develop their capacities to make the best use of changing opportunities in society.
- (2) To improve the young person's ability to find, gain and retain employment and to cope with extended periods of unemployment. "

In the light of these two aims, the following objectives were detailed:

- " It is intended that throughout the course the young person should
 - 1) develop his/her self-confidence
 - 2) develop ways of coping with changing roles in adult life
 - 3) increase his/her self-reliance and develop a sense of self-worth
 - 4) develop a realistic self-assessment
 - 5) become more self-directing

- 6) develop the means to make sense of his/her Work Experience placement or Special Programmes involvement
- 7) develop inter-personal skills and the ability to work with others
- 8) develop methods and attitudes to enable him/her to cope with problems which arise in the work place
- 9) develop methods to overcome fear of new experience, learn relevant new skills and develop adaptability
- 10) discover resources for employment, community activities, and leisure
- 11) improve his/her communication skills (including literary and numeracy). "(81)

Setting out aims and objectives is one thing, implementing them is another. As has been referred to before, YOP trainees were not for the most part the usual college clientele. Often, they were those whom the educational system had previously chosen to brand as failures. Consequently, they brought with them attitudes of both fear and resentment towards a conventional educational environment. It was soon found that they could not just be sat down and taught. Their interest had to be engaged through practical tasks.

Curriculum development along these lines had probably been taken furthest at College 3. Originally, it had been attempted to improve the communication skills of trainees through straightforward literacy classes. However, when the format of the courses was changed from day release to block release, the emphasis was moved away from formal classes to practical projects. Under the new system, the first block was primarily concerned with induction and the development of group interaction, though it also included job search material. Thereafter, the other blocks consisted of various exercises and projects. Thus, for example, during one block the group might be set an exercise which involved the making of a video. During another, they might be asked to go out into the local community and carry out a survey or find out certain information. The formal content of such exercises of course had an inherent value of its own. However, more important was the 'hidden curriculum', which involved the development of the communication skills and working relationships that were necessary to carry out such tasks successfully. Recently, further changes had been made in the course curriculum, with the result that the whole of the

course was vocationally and practically based, and there was nothing that could be described as social and life skills per se. The new course was set up so as to provide as wide a choice of practical and vocational skills as possible. The range of possibilities was extended by the use of facilities at what had previously been the Dockyard Apprentice Training Centre and by the buying in of certain skills that the existing staff could not provide for themselves. The list included: filing and welding, electronics, video-making, photography, food preparation, sewing, interior design, theatre skills and community care. Trainees were encouraged to negotiate the content of their courses on the basis of what was on offer.

Apparently, then considerable effort went into the development of courses that would respond to the needs of individual trainees. Yet, at this point, it should be recalled that both the sponsors and the trainees that I interviewed in the work experience sectors were often highly critical of the social and life skills provision that was available at the colleges. It will be remembered that it was thought to be both badly organised and irrelevant to the work experience, with too much time being spent talking about doing things, rather than actually doing them. Obviously, the reforms and developments that have been described above indicate that the college providers were not unaware of such criticisms and were continually trying to respond to them. However, it must be pointed out that the particular criticisms that I recorded were voiced by people who for the most part had experienced the more recent versions of the courses, which were supposed to have already taken on board these points. Clearly, despite the efforts that had been put into curriculum development, residual problems remained. I want now to attempt to examine these from the angle of those who were responsible for the social life skills provision in the colleges.

The first problem, which has already been mentioned, was the fear and loathing expressed by many trainees towards educational institutions. This was obviously to a large extent the product of the trainees' previous educational experiences, for which the colleges had no direct responsibility. However, it also seemed to college staff that these negative attitudes were sometimes being reinforced by the prejudices and hostility of employers and other sponsors, who were turning the

trainees against the college provision before they had had the chance to try it out for themselves. Furthermore, in the case of some WEEP sponsors, it seemed that they were deliberately discouraging their trainees because they did not want the disruption of having to release them from their work. As we have seen, this was certainly the case with one of the sample of WEEP sponsors who were interviewed for this case study.

The prejudices of both the trainees and the sponsors were reflected in the difficulties that colleges experienced in recruiting trainees to fill their courses. It seems that originally the MSC assumed that, if the provision was available, the trainees would not need any special encouragement to come and make use of it. However, despite the fact that the amount of provision was only sufficient to cover a small proportion of those who were eligible, finding trainees to fill the courses often proved to be a problem, as we have seen already in connection with the Exemplary Project. The easiest way to ensure that a course was filled, was to make some kind of permanent arrangement with one of the larger schemes. However, increasingly, such schemes were opting to organise their own 'in-house' off-the-job training. Thus the colleges were being forced to recruit more of their trainees from the smaller WEEP schemes. This was often a difficult and time-consuming process. The most effective method was for members of staff to make personal visits to the trainees and their sponsors on the individual schemes. However, no time or resources could be specifically allocated for this purpose. Furthermore, it was on occasion suggested that the MSC had to some extent been conniving with the employers' obstructive attitudes, by not emphasising the trainees' entitlement to off-the-job training for fear that it would discourage their participation as sponsors. In this connection, it is noticeable that the standard monitoring forms for WEEP schemes, unlike those for Community Projects, did not include any question asking whether trainees were encouraged to participate in appropriate off-the-job training. (82)

The problems associated with recruitment can be regarded as manifestations of a wider problem, that of the lack of co-ordination and co-operation between the college providers of off-the-job training

and the work experience sponsors. This also had a detrimental effect upon the content of the courses. Because the college staff had little contact with the work experience schemes, they were not always fully aware of what the trainees were doing on these schemes. Thus, although the off-the-job training might be designed to be relevant to the world of work in general, it was difficult to ensure that it connected to the particular experience of work of the trainees concerned. Again, the staff tried to remedy the problem by making individual visits to the trainees and their sponsors, but once again they were restricted by the fact that there was no allocation of time and resources for them to do so. However, the problem was not merely one of physical distance. Such lack of co-ordination sometimes existed between the providers of training courses and the providers of associated 'off-the-job' provision within the same college. Underlying this was a fundamental difference of philosophy. Most sponsors and providers of vocational training courses tended to understand the social and individual development of trainees in terms of their ability to adapt and fit in to a given working environment. In contrast, many college providers of off-the-job training understood trainee development in terms of their ability to act autonomously and to question the status quo. They did not want merely to assist in the production of compliant and adaptable industrial cannon fodder for employers. Thus, the lack of co-ordination with sponsors and trainers was not always an omission on the part of providers of social and life skills training, but in some cases was a deliberate attempt to provide the trainees with a countervailing influence.

Given such philosophical differences, it is not surprising that some of the criticisms made of the social and life skills provision by work experience sponsors were aimed directly at the college staff. It was alleged variously that they were disorganised, that they did not have any interest in the trainees, and that they lacked experience of the realities of the world of work. Once again, I tried to examine the problems giving rise to such allegations from the angle of the colleges themselves. The underlying problem appeared to be that, in

the context of college activities as a whole, YOP work in general, and social and life skills training in particular, were considered to be short-term and low status areas of work. This underlying problem manifested itself differently in different situations. At Colleges 1 and 2, where social and life skills provision was on a comparatively small scale, it could for the most part be handled by the existing staff of the General/Liberal Studies Departments, and if it was necessary to take on new staff, they would not be solely concerned with this type of provision. In this situation, the problem took the form of the YOP off-the-job training not necessarily being amongst the highest priorities of those who were responsible for its provision. Furthermore, these staff had generally been appointed on the basis of their academic experience and qualifications, primarily to teach further education students. Thus, they were not always best prepared to teach non-academic trainees about social and life skills in the world of work. At College 3, however, the situation was different because of the larger scale of provision. Here, staff were recruited specifically to provide off-the-job training to YOP trainees. But there was still a problem. These staff could only be offered short-term contracts, and thus their position always tended to be insecure. Under these circumstances, it was difficult to attract high calibre staff with relevant experience. Although efforts were made to recruit staff with a wide range of experience other than teaching and academic experience, this was not always possible and it was acknowledged that there was some truth in the observation that unemployed teachers were being employed to teach unemployed school leavers about the world of work. Indeed, it seemed that this was often an opportunity for those who were looking for teaching experience - a kind of work experience for prospective teachers and lecturers. Naturally, in these circumstances, there was a high turnover of staff. Those who were relatively competent and successful would use the experience as a stepping stone to more secure and higher status employment within the educational system. Whilst those who could not cope would not be offered a new contract. Meanwhile the permanent staff who were overseeing this area of work, once again, had other priorities and did not have time to keep close control of what was happening, particularly as they were located on a completely different site. As for staff development and training, whether with permanent

or specifically recruited staff, we have already seen that the county-wide programme of local curriculum groups for all college staff involved in YOP work was only just being established in January 1983.

In conclusion, I think that it has to be acknowledged that many of the criticisms that were made of college provision of social and life skills training were justified. Certainly, during my visits I gained firsthand experience of the poor level of organisation which sometimes existed. Yet, at the same time, it needs to be recognised that some of the problems arose from circumstances beyond the control of those directly responsible for this provision. Social and life skills training in colleges seemed to suffer twice over from being a peripheral activity. On the one hand, it was peripheral to the work experience schemes that it was servicing. On the other hand, it was peripheral to the activities of the colleges as a whole. Thus, it tended to fall into the chasm between education and industry, over which YOP provision was supposed to be building a bridge.

Yet, this fate did not necessarily befall all YOP off-the-job training provision. The experience of trainees who enrolled on established college courses which carried with them qualifications tended to be far more satisfactory. In this case there were two important differences. First, the colleges and their staff were providing what they were used to and merely adding numbers to existing provision. Secondly, the trainees concerned tended to be better motivated and more able to accept the college provision on its own terms. As far as social and life skills training was concerned, it appeared to have been more successful when it was not college-based, but provided 'in-house' at work experience schemes and training establishments.

One such example was the social and life skills and remedial education provided for trainees undertaking YOP courses at the Skillcentre. Here, it will be remembered, that the provision was made by an education instructor who worked on-site at the centre. Being on-site, he was able to maintain close contact with the trainees and their supervisors, and could co-ordinate his contribution with what was taking place on the various courses. Previously, this instructor had had

no experience of social and life skills provision. To start with he had tried to work from the MSC's Instructional Guide, but he had not found this particularly useful. The standard subjects covered by the Guide had not interested the trainees and the formal talks that he had attempted to arrange had been a failure. He had then gone to a course organised by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO), which he had found far more helpful and which had led him to adopt a less formal approach. The basic set-up was weekly discussions with groups of approximately eight trainees. The length of these discussions was variable, depending on how interested the trainees were in prolonging them. The range of subjects covered was wide. The only set topic was that of job seeking skills. Otherwise, it depended on what the trainees wanted to bring up on the basis of their own personal experiences. Subjects included the differences between work and school, conflicts of loyalty, and the consequences of sex. An example of a subject not included was that of drugs, which did not appear to be an issue that impinged upon the daily lives of the trainees. Similarly, the instructor did not attempt to 'gen up' information in order to be able to lead discussions on subjects that were outside his own personal experience. What he tried to do was to draw on his own experience as an adult to fill in some of the gaps around what they were learning from their more formal vocational training. This was not so much a matter of telling them what to do, as helping them to develop and make decisions for themselves by showing them what the consequences of their actions might be. The educational function and the counselling function were thus closely inter-related.

In broad and abstract terms, this trainee-centred developmental approach was one that was shared by college providers. However, the kind of knowledge and experience that the Skillcentre instructor was trying to convey was not that which could be taught out of a manual by a tutor in a college who lacked any direct experience of industry. It was more akin to the kind of worldly wisdom that traditionally a new apprentice might acquire from the experience of being asked to collect a left-handed screw-driver or a glass hammer. A particular example which had actually arisen was that of a trainee who it was discovered always clocked in at the Skillcentre exactly at 8.00 a.m. When the education instructor asked him about this, he found that the trainee

had been told to clock in promptly at 8 and had thought that this meant that he had to stand outside waiting until the exact minute. This might seem a comparatively trivial point, but it illustrates the advantage of a social and life skills instructor having direct experience of the industrial environment into which the trainees were being introduced. It should also be noted that the training course attended by the Skillcentre instructor had played an important role in the development of his approach to social and life skills instruction. However, this training could not have substituted for his own experience and close involvement with the industrial environment in which the trainees were working. It merely taught him to make use of his own experience and relate it to what he could see was happening to the trainees.

Apart from certain such exceptions, the majority of off-the-job social and life skills training available within the local area appears to have done more to highlight than to bridge the gap between education and industry. Blame could be put upon individuals and institutions on both sides of this divide, but it was the existence of the divide as a long-standing historical fact that was really responsible for the failure. Nevertheless, the exceptions did illustrate what could be done with the right combination of individuals and institutions. What appeared to be needed was an individual who combined a sound industrial experience with the capacity and training to be able to convey what they had learnt from this experience to a group of young trainees. Such a person was best located directly alongside the trainees in a realistic industrial setting which nevertheless provided scope and priority for the educational goals of personal development. This appears to have been a rare conjuncture under YOP, though certain of the larger schemes had recently begun to provide their own off-the-job training using instructors who were located on-site. But still the systematic and close co-ordination of on and off-the-job training was a major challenge that would have to be faced by YTS.

Footnotes

1. Sawdon, A., Pelican, J., & Tucker, S., Study of the Transition from School to Working Life, Youthaid, Volumes I and II, 1979 and 1981. See Volume I, pp. 105-110 and Volume II, pp. 115-123. Often the key limiting factor is the cost of daily travel.
2. See MSC, Young People and Work, MSC, 1977, paras. 3.12, 3.23, and 4.27-4.33.
3. This figure is based on Figure II of the Hampshire County Planning Department Working Paper, 'South East Hampshire Employment Study Part 1 Employment Structure and Trends', June 1977; and has been updated using statistics from the Employment Gazette.
4. For accounts of the post-war development of the Portsmouth economy see the following: Sydney Higgins, The Post-War Employment Situation in Portsmouth, St John's College, York, 1960; the Atlas of Portsmouth, Department of Geography, Portsmouth Polytechnic, 1975, Section 3.6; and B. Bye, J. Beattie and B. Purkiss, The Destruction of A Community, Southern Region Trade Union Education and Research Unit and the Research Department of TGWU Region Two, 1982, pp. 1-2.
5. Between 1961 and 1975 there was a net increase of almost 30,000 jobs in the Portsmouth TWA. However, by the latter year of this analysis, the reversal had already begun with 3,300 jobs being lost between 1974 and 1975. The Portsmouth TWA appears to have been particularly hard-hit by this mid-seventies recession, but to have fared comparatively better since. See Hampshire County Planning Department, op.cit., p. 1 and p. 8.
6. In this context the term 'employment office' includes job centres.
7. For example, over 40,000 people travel into and out of Portsmouth every day for the purpose of their employment.
8. The South East Hampshire Division of the Careers Service included the six following careers offices: Portsmouth, Cosham, Gosport, Fareham, Havant and Waterloo/Petersfield. However, it was not the exact equivalent of the Portsmouth TWA. Whereas the TWA included Liphook as a sub-office of the Petersfield Employment Office, the Careers Service regarded Liphook as a sub-office of the Alton Careers Office and therefore included it within its North Hampshire Division. Hence, statistics given for the Portsmouth TWA included Liphook, whereas those for the South East Hampshire Division of the Careers Service did not. However, the area concerned was comparatively small and not densely populated. Thus, for most practical purposes, the Portsmouth TWA and South East Hampshire could be regarded as equivalents.
9. See The News, (Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers Ltd.), 25th November 1981.

10. There had been a 1978 Census of Employment, but because of certain local omissions it was not considered to be reliable. It should be noted that until 1978 these surveys were annual, providing a regular flow of information which no longer exists.
11. This information is reproduced in Youth Training Resources, 'A Proposal to Establish Local Training Initiatives to Meet the Requirements of the MSC's "NTI" Report', April 1982, figure 13. It should be noted that the Annual Census of Employment excludes both Ministry of Defence uniformed personnel and the self-employed.
12. See Hampshire County Planning Department, op.cit., p. 18. The Portsmouth TWA location quotient for Electronic Apparatus separated from Electrical Engineering was 4.81.
13. The Department of Employment makes regular quarterly estimates of the number and industrial distribution of employees in employment throughout Great Britain. These are calculated on the basis of projections forward from the previous Census of Employment using information from a sample of firms. In the December 1982 Employment Gazette the first results from the September 1981 Census were made available, and the quarterly estimates were revised accordingly. The June 1982 figures were the most up to date, comprehensive revised estimates then available.
14. The Portsmouth TWA June 1982 estimates were calculated as follows:

$$\text{Portsmouth TWA Total 1977} \times \frac{\text{G.B. Total June 1982}}{\text{G.B. Total 1977}} = \text{Portsmouth TWA June '82}$$

This calculation was made individually for each SIC order.
15. The total for 1982 is slightly less (178,900 compared to 180,300) if it is worked out on the basis of the change in the total number of employees in employment rather than on the sum of changes in individual SIC orders. This would indicate that the Portsmouth TWA industrial structure was slightly more resilient to job loss than the national average.
16. See, Bye B., Beattie J., and Purkiss B., The Destruction of a Community, The Southern Regional Committee of the Transport and General Workers' Union, 1982, p. 4.
17. Ibid., p. 3.
18. Estimates of the 'knock-on' effect of the rundown of the Dockyard on other employment in the area have varied greatly. Local trade unionists have argued that as many as 14,000 dependent jobs could be affected. (See ibid., p. 13). However, a survey carried out by Southampton University on behalf of TVS put the figure at just under 2,500 over a four year period. The reasons for this lower estimate were explained as follows:
a) the low wages of dockyard workers in relation to benefit levels; b) the development of local employment not dependent on the Dockyard; c) the fact that the Dockyard is self-reliant for many services, and that many of the orders that it does place go to firms outside the area.

19. See, Bye B., Beattie J., and Purkiss B., op.cit., pp.7-9.
The trades mentioned include: Boilermakers, Shipwrights,
Sailmakers, Coppersmiths, Joiners, Hosemakers, Iron Caulker
Riveters, etc.
20. See, The News (Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers Ltd.),
15th December 1982, p.1.
21. The actual figure for the resident population was 530,664 -
see O.P.C.S., Small Area Statistics, April 1981.
22. See Hampshire County Planning Department, Census Working
Paper No. 9 'Economic Activity in Hampshire', August 1982, p.4.
23. Between 1961 and 1971 there had been a substantial migration
of population into the Portsmouth TWA.
24. All the figures quoted in this paragraph are derived from a
comparison of the OPCS Small Area Statistics for the Portsmouth
TWA between 1971 and 1981.
25. The survey is carried out by the Hampshire County Education
Department.
26. See below, Figures 10, 11 and 12.
27. The source of Table 14 is an annual count undertaken by the
Hampshire Careers Service. The total here is not the same
as that given for 1982 by Table 13, because this table deals
with all school and college leavers in South East Hampshire,
rather than just minimum age school leavers in the Portsmouth TWA.
28. Table 15 is derived from figures similar to those in Table 14,
as provided by the Hampshire Careers Service. It will be noted
that there was approximately a 10% reduction in the total
number of school and college leavers entering the labour
market between 1977 and 1982. This confirms the trend that
has already been identified from Table 13 above. Despite
this reduction in total numbers, the other figures remain
comparable insofar as the number of school leavers about whom
there was information was approximately the same in the two
years.
29. In 1977, of course, YOP had not yet started. The base figure
is thus provided by the number of participants in JCP and WEP.
30. The source for Figure 10 was the statistical records of the
Hampshire Careers Service.
31. For example, of the 3084 16-19 year olds registered at Employment
Offices in the Portsmouth TWA in October 1982, 1501 were 18 year
olds, 1460 were 19 year olds and only 123 were aged 16-17.
32. The source for Figure 11 was again the Hampshire Careers Services.
Young people employed under the Youth Employment Subsidy are
not included.

33. The Employment Office figures for Figure 16 were provided by the Department of Employment.
34. Hampshire Careers Service, 'Review of the Work of Hampshire Careers Service During the Period 1st October 1978 to 30th September 1980', para. 3.2.
35. It should be noted that it was clearly recognised by the Hampshire Careers Service that these pre-YOP special measures were merely palliatives. A report on the employment position of young people in Hampshire which was made in August 1976 stated, "no real solution can be achieved without a return to full employment and measures taken at the local level can only be regarded as palliatives."
36. A single set of figures available for August 1978 indicate that at this early stage of YOP the South East Division of Hampshire accounted for just over 50 per cent of the provision throughout the county.
37. At certain other times of the year, because of the college terms, course provision was at a much lower level. However, it should also be taken into account that the short courses had a more rapid turnover of participants than other kinds of provision.
38. The main differences between the South East Division and the county as a whole concern the smaller categories of scheme type, such as Community Industry and the Training Workshop, which were based on a large individual unit. Because both of these units were situated in South East Hampshire, these scheme types inevitably represented a higher proportion of provision in that Division than throughout the county as a whole.
39. Table 16 can be compared with Table 3 of Chapter 4. However, the comparison is not exact. Table 16 records the distribution of filled places on the local programme at a particular date in each year; whereas Table 3 of Chapter 4 records the distribution of the annual throughputs of entrants to the national programme.
40. This turnabout can probably be explained by the fact that as YOP grew it became increasingly difficult to find sufficient WEEP sponsors in the more economically depressed areas of the country; whereas in an above average area like the Portsmouth TWA there was always enough supply of sponsors to meet the rising demand.
41. There were also a small number of employer-based Work Skills Courses within South East Hampshire. However, unfortunately, it was not possible to include an example of one of these in the sample of schemes and courses visited in the second phase of this local case study.
42. In the first year of the school leavers undertaking there were two 'failures' in the whole of Hampshire, and in the second year there were none. These local results were given in the Annexes of the first two Reviews of Special Programmes.

43. The local figures for the final three years of the school leavers undertaking were obtained from the Hampshire Careers Service.
44. See MSC, Review of the Second Year of Special Programmes, 1980, Annex 6, p.35.
45. These results were obtained from the Hampshire Careers Service.
46. This information was obtained from Hampshire Careers Service records.
47. The statistics on which Figure 13 is based were derived from Hampshire Careers Service records. Incomplete information was available for July/September 1979.
48. See Figures 5 and 6 in Chapter 4.
49. Table 17 is based on an informal survey carried out by the local MSC Area Office in preparation for the introduction of the Youth Training Scheme.
50. See The News, 19 and 21 May 1982. The MP concerned was Mr Peter Griffiths.
51. See Sub-Appendix 1, p. 608.
52. See MSC, Work Experience on Employers' Premises: Sponsors' Handbook, SPD L1, August 1980.
53. See ibid., para. 10.
54. Ibid., para. 13.
55. See ibid., paras. 16 and 17.
56. See ibid., paras. 5 and 19-21.
57. See ibid., para. 26.
58. See ibid., para. 27.
59. The role of the Careers Service in relation to YOP was one of both counselling and monitoring.
60. See Sub-Appendix 2, p. 612.
61. There were, however exceptions to this general rule. Thus an MSC spokesman was quoted in the local newspaper as saying: "It is not surprising that the scheme is abused. There is no way an employer is going to get someone to work for him for £25 a week. Add to that the saving a company can make if it is using free slave labour and the problem becomes a very difficult one to solve. Youngsters just have to like and lump it." See The News, 31st July 1982.

62. See Sub-Appendix 3, p. 617.
63. See R.R. Mackenzie, 'Report on Information Technology Centre' to the Planning Services Committee and the Finance and Personnel Committee of Portsmouth City Council, 9th December 1981, para. 3.
64. See ibid., para. 4.1.
65. See, for example, MSC, Guide to Community Service, SPD L6, August 1980, para. 16(g).
66. See The News, 31st October and 5th November 1981.
67. This was stated in an internal Special Programmes Board paper on ITECs (SPB/81/N13).
68. See, for example, MSC, Guide to Training Workshops, SPD L9, August 1980, paras. 27-36.
69. Ibid., para. 35.
70. See MSC, Guide to Short Training Courses, SPD L19, August 1980, para. 9.
71. See MSC, Guide to Work Introduction Courses, SPD L29, August 1980, paras. 7 and 8.
72. See MSC, Guide to Work Skills Courses, SPD L53, July 1982, paras. 7 and 8.
73. MSC, Guide to Short Training Courses, SPD L19, August 1980, para. 9.
74. MSC, Guide to Work Introduction Courses, SPD L29, August 1980, para. 8.
75. Ibid.
76. See MSC, Guide to Work Skills Courses, SPD L53, July 1982. This guide also puts an additional emphasis upon the introduction of new technology.
77. This can be seen from Table 15 above, where it will be noted that the number of school leavers entering the construction industry in 1982 as a percentage of those in 1977 is higher than for any other industry.
78. See, for example, MSC, Guide to Short Training Courses, SPD L19, August 1980, para. 22.
79. See Colin Turner, Jean Finlayson and Bob Challis, Planning Local Education Authority Support for YOP : MSC Exemplary Projects, Further Education Staff College, Combe Lodge, 1982.
80. See MSC, Instructional Guide to Social and Life Skills, SPD L35.

81. Hampshire County Exemplary Project Group, 'Exemplary Projects Experiments to Improve Linkage of Further Education with Work Experience Elements of the Youth Opportunities Programme', Appendix 1.
82. Question 9 of Section 1 of the standard monitoring form for Community Projects (SP8A CP) was as follows:
- "(a) Are trainees being encouraged to participate in appropriate forms of associated training/FE? YES/NO
 - (b) Outline what forms of training or associated FE are being provided (e.g. social and life skills training, on-the-job, day release, remedial, etc.)"

If the standard monitoring form for WEEP schemes (SP8A WEEP (3rd Rev.)) is referred back to in sub-appendix 2, it will be noted that there is no equivalent question on off-the-job training. This is despite the fact that in the official MSC Guides to these two different kinds of scheme the requirement that trainees should be offered opportunities for appropriate training or further education is given equal emphasis (see MSC, SPD L1 and L6, August 1980).

SUB-APPENDIX 1WEEP QUESTIONNAIRE1. Backgrounda) Employer

Name of firm

Type of business

Name and position of
interviewee

Number of employees

Composition of workforce
(m/f, p-time/f-time,
apprentices and youths)Changes in number and
composition, recentlyLocal employment prospects
in type of business

Unionised?

b) Scheme

When did you first become a work experience sponsor?

How did you hear of the scheme?

What information were you given about the scheme?

Why did you decide to become a sponsor?

How many trainees have you sponsored?

How many places have you offered at one time?

If unionised, what has been the attitude of the unions to the scheme?

2. Selection

Have you been prepared to accept anyone sent by the Careers Service?

Have you been prepared to accept trainees of either sex?

Have you required certain minimum qualifications?

What else have you taken account of in making your selection?

Have you applied different criteria than for the recruitment of normal employees?

3. Induction

What form of induction have you given your trainees?

Were there any particular Health and Safety aspects of the job that needed pointing out?

4. Planned Work Experience

Can you describe the range of work experience undertaken by your trainees?

Has any on-the-job training been included?

How closely have the trainees been supervised?

How much responsibility have the trainees been given?

How realistic has the work experience been?

In what ways have the trainees worked differently from normal employees?

5. Off-the-job Training

Have any of your trainees received any form of off-the-job training?

Have you ever encouraged your trainees to take up such opportunities?

6. Counselling

Who has been responsible for supervision and counselling of the trainee?

Have they had any specific training for this role?

How have they gone about this role?

7. Monitoring

How regularly have the MSC visited your premises?

What have they asked you about?

How regularly has the Careers Service been in contact with you and your trainees?

What have the Careers Service been concerned about?

If unionised, what role have the unions played in overseeing the scheme?

8. End of Scheme

How long have your trainees stayed with you?

Have any proved unsatisfactory ?

Have you taken on any at the end of their scheme?

Do you know what has happened to those you have not taken on? If so, how many have got jobs and what kind of jobs?

What other benefits have trainees received from their experience?

9. Costs and Benefits for Sponsor

How has involvement in YOP affected your normal pattern of recruitment?

How much extra work and expense has involvement in the scheme cost you?

How much have the trainees contributed in terms of productive work?

Are you intending to contribute to YTS?

SUB-APPENDIX 2MONITORING REPORTWORK EXPERIENCE ON EMPLOYERS PREMISES

In YES/NO questions where the answer to the questions is NO explain or give details of action taken or proposed.

RECRUITMENT

- 1 How many trainees are now on the scheme?
- 2 Have all the trainees been recruited from ESD/CO? YES/NO
- 3 Is the sponsor finding it reasonably easy to fill places? YES/NO

THE SCHEME

- 4 Are all the trainees being given a planned induction period on first joining the scheme eg was holiday entitlement explained? YES/NO
- 5 Have newly recruited trainees received their copies of the "Where do I start" booklet, and the Health and Safety leaflet? (Health and Safety leaflet not yet to hand). YES/NO

In YES/NO questions where the answer to the questions is NO explain or give details of action taken or proposed.

- 6 Are trainees undertaking the range of work experience as described on the proposal forms? YES/NO
- 7 Are sponsor's normal recruitment and training arrangements continuing? YES/NO
- 8 a) Have arrangements been made for the CS or ESD to provide trainees with advice about possibilities of permanent employment or a further YOP opportunity? YES/NO
- b) Has the sponsor considered retaining the trainee(s) as a permanent employee(s)? YES/NO

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION

- 9 Is the Responsible Officer effectively controlling the overall operation of the scheme? (In all cases, give brief details of the degree of involvement)
- 10 Are trainees being adequately supervised on tasks? (In all cases, give brief details of arrangements for supervision)
- 11 a) Are assessment and progress records properly maintained? YES/NO
- b) Is all attendance, timekeeping and progress recorded as satisfactory? YES/NO

In YES/NO questions where the answer to the questions is NO explain or give details of action taken or proposed.

12 Outline the arrangements for participation of trainees in appropriate forms of associated training and further education, including social and life skills, on-the-job, day release, etc.

13 a) Has the sponsor received an adequate supply of the YOP certificates? YES/NO

b) Has the importance of the certificate been explained to the trainee as an employment reference and/or for the purpose of claiming benefit? YES/NO

c) Is the sponsor satisfied that YOP certificates have been issued to young persons who have terminated? YES/NO

FINANCE PROCEDURES

14 Does the sample check of pay sheets (SP26) against the sponsor's attendance records give cause for concern? YES/NO

15 Is there any evidence of additional payments to young people? YES/NO

16 a) Is the payments procedure satisfactory? YES/NO

b) Are allowances receipted correctly? YES/NO

17 Are the arrangements for dealing with unpaid items in accordance with the instructions? YES/NO

In YES/NO questions where the answer to the questions is NO explain or give details of action taken or proposed.

CONDITIONS AND WELFARE

- | | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 18 | Are operating conditions satisfactory? | YES/NO |
| | | |
| 19 | a) Is protective clothing necessary? | YES/NO |
| | | |
| | b) Does the sponsor provide it? | YES/NO |
| | | |
| 20 | Briefly outline any obvious health or safety hazards (eg is machinery guarded, are warning notices posted, etc?) and if there are, state what action has been suggested | |
| | | |
| 21 | Are fire instructions clearly displayed and fire exits free from obstruction? | YES/NO |
| | | |
| 22 | Are first aid facilities readily available? | YES/NO |
| | | |
| 23 | Is there an Accident Book? | YES/NO |
| | | |
| 24 | a) Is Employers' Liability (Compulsory) Insurance cover provided and a certificate displayed? | YES/NO |
| | | |
| 24 | b) Is there any additional insurance cover? (detail is YES) | YES/NO |

In YES/NO questions where the answer to the questions is NO explain or give details of action taken or proposed.

- 25 a) Were there any disabled young people on the project/scheme at the time of the visit? YES/NO
- b) If so, briefly detail what arrangements have been made for them and state whether they are satisfactory

TRAINEES' COMMENTS

- 26 Do the trainees consider that their induction to the scheme covered satisfactorily all the necessary subjects eg hours of work, holidays, allowances paid, sickness, accidents, time off for interview etc? YES/NO
- 27 a) What are the trainees' opinions of the scheme programme?
- b) Have they any suggestions for improvement?
- 28 Do the trainees consider the provisions made for personal advice and support adequate? YES/NO
- 29 Any other general observations. (This should include any suggestion for revision of the scheme programme which can be discussed with the sponsor(s). A brief report should be made here on any schemes awarded status "A".)

PROGRAMME OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFILING AND TCR BY:-

<u>AO STAFF</u>	OR	<u>RO STAFF</u>
HEO	PRESENTATION TO MANAGER/SPONSOR	1 DAY
TRAINER	PRESENTATION TO SUPERVISOR OF BASIC SKILLS PROFILE	1 DAY
HEO OR FULL TIME QI EO	DOCUMENTATION ON INITIAL ASSESSMENT ('CAN DO' PROFILE, SELF ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES ETC) (LOG BOOKS)	1 DAY
HEO/EO	DOCUMENTATION ON BASIC SKILLS PROFILES AND MATRIX	1 DAY
HEO/EO	FINALISE DETAILS	1 DAY
	PRESENTATION TO SUPERVISORS ON SKILLS SAMPLING	
TRAINER	ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES + TCR	1 DAY
HEO + EO	CHECK PROGRESS	1 DAY
HEO + EO	CHECK FINAL VERSION	1 DAY
HEO/EO -	{ FOLLOW UP - 1st MONTH } { AFTER - 3rd MONTH } { AFTER - 6th MONTH }	
<u>AO STAFF</u>		<u>RO STAFF</u>
TOTAL TIME PER SCHEME - MIN		TOTAL (MIN).
HEO TEAM LEADER = 3 DAYS		RQIO = 3 DAYS.
AO QI EO = 3 + 2 DAYS		QIEO = 3 + 2 DAYS.
TRAINER = 2 DAYS		TRAINER, 2 DAYS.

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